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THE SCHOOL OF SANCTITY

THE SCHOOL OF SANCTITY

RETREAT ADDRESSES

BY THE LATE
FRANK WESTON, D.D.

Bishop of Zanzibar

WITH PREFACE BY
DUNCAN TRAVERS

Canon of Zanzibar

THE SCHOOL OF SANCTITY

RETREAT ADDRESSES

BY FRANK WESTON, D.D.

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PREFACE

‘We want complete reverence for God, complete confidence in God, and complete submission to God’s will *now* at this time. This is stability, the pit blasted into the rock in which the standard is set’ (p. 72).

THE legacy of Bishop Weston to us is that of a man who was very human and very spiritual.

A theologian, he has left as record of his powers various books of high order and full of deep thoughts. Of these *The One Christ* is the most noticeable, perhaps.

In addition, have come to us some of his Addresses of which this book contains three sets. They were given in Retreat to the Sisters of the Community of the Sacred Passion in Africa, and were taken down at the time.

They were not meant for publication, but it is thought that the words of a spiritual leader such as our Bishop was would be of service to those who recognize his spiritual depth, and are able to profit by the intensity of his feeling. They reveal both his personality and his spirit.

Depth of feeling surely was a characteristic of the Bishop which at times carried him into regions which ordinary mortals cannot hope to attain. He reached them by the path of self-surrender. He was following in his Master’s footsteps, and walked with ‘bare

feet' that he might not miss the paths that Jesus trod. On those earthly tracts Jesus left traces that are indelible.

Hath He marks to lead me to Him,
If He be my Guide?
In His feet and hands are wound-prints,
And His side.

Let our beloved friend and counsellor, therefore, sowing seeds in our hearts and minds, tell us what were the visions he saw on his long walks and the thoughts that came to him on his weary marches to and fro, up and down, and during the vigils he spent in prayer before the Tabernacle. Let us take him as a spiritual guide, and if what he says to us helps us to find for ourselves Him whom he ever sought, well and good. It is what he would have earnestly desired himself, only he would have said to us: 'It is Him you must see, not me. It is Him you must find, not me. I was only His disciple, and to be His disciple is what He desires of *you* and those whom you are called upon to serve.'

DUNCAN TRAVERS.

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THE SACRED HEART

I

THE SACRED HEART

CONTEMPLATE Jesus, Incarnate Love making known to us the love of God in terms that we can understand, His heart open to us.

Let us begin by considering how all who were gathered on Calvary were drawn to fix their gaze on Jesus, how He filled the whole landscape, so that every one of them was intent on Jesus, watching how He was suffering, watching how He would die. 'They watched Him.' It is what we want to do in retreat ; to watch Him, to be so engrossed with the thought of Him, that nothing else has power to distract us, all else swallowed up in this great effort to watch Jesus.

This is what in all simplicity we are bound to do. His heart is such a simple thing, it is love concentrated on us. And we, in retreat, want not only to pray and to speak to Him, but to be wrapped up *in* Him, to use these days as a time in which to fill our hearts with thought of Him, to get our consideration really rooted in Him, so to watch Him that with the centurion we may cry, ' Truly this is the Son of God.'

Let us take three simple thoughts concerning (a) Gratitude, (b) Shame, (c) Hope.

1. *Gratitude* is the first response of our heart to the heart of Jesus. What does our presence here before our Lord mean ? We are here before Him because

the Eternal Son became incarnate and humbled Himself unto death for us, because for evermore at God's right hand the heart of Jesus is the centre of the new redeemed human race, and this all for us, for me.

It is wonderful how little gratitude I ordinarily have to our Lord. I think of my vocation, that in that heart beating at God's right hand there is a place for me, *my* place that no one else can fill. The wonder of it ! The Creator of the universe does not forget me ; I have *my* place, *my* work, *my* share in His love.

He has led me in the past with such wisdom and love, led me here to watch Him. I know whatever He may ask me to do that I have got strength to promise that I will try and do it, I have power to respond. And yet I am ungrateful, I do not wholly trust Him, though my past reaches out behind and it is something to thank Him about, that past in which He has led me to my vocation, yet I am not really grateful to Him for it.

Consider how in looking back one can trace the interference of the heart of Jesus at critical moments in one's life ; how He put out His arm and protected me and carried me, His heart my refuge always, dull, cold, blind, as I have been. I am not grateful as I ought to be for His love and care. There is still self-love and self-will. I want to see Him only, and be filled with gratitude.

Think of His patience, the way our Lord bears with us. Is there anything more marvellous than how He endures with all patience ? Think of our impatience with others, how little time we give a child to improve, and then remember that there is never a single day in which we do not fall short of what our Lord has taught

us, we who in our vocation have such great knowledge of His will. Think of a poor African woman, not quite sure whether God or evil spirits rule, and of us who have experimental knowledge that He is All in all, and yet we fail Him, and how patient He is with us. Think of the joy of the heart of Jesus as night after night He forgives, night after night wipes out the handwriting that is against us ; ought we not to be grateful ? He is everything, I am nothing.

My first response to the heart of Jesus is gratitude to Him Who is my All ; it is the permanent possession of my soul, not a mere feeling ; my will fixed in the will of Jesus, knowing His love is limitless. How can a Religious be sad ? Only when she forgets to be grateful !

2. *Shame.* ‘The shame of my face hath covered me.’ The sense of shame is the very root of penitence. ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.’

One of the things for which our Lord calls us into close union with Him is penitence ; it is the mark of the cloister, the supreme mark of the saint. I ought to feel shame because I am grateful.

Let us think of some reasons why we should be ashamed :—

(1) There are our failures to respond to Him. There are the crosses which He meant us to carry and which we shirked ; there are crosses which He gave us to carry in union with Him and we carried them perhaps in a grudging way, we talked about them to others, we looked for sympathy in other hearts than the heart of Jesus only ; we did a piece of what He gave us to do but not all, and not well ; we did not give Him all the glory He wanted.

There is our failure to respond day by day, allowing sadness and weariness ; not stepping with Him along the way of the Cross, but wanting to sit down and bemoan, ready to follow if the divine light would shine all the way, but hesitating in darkness ; ready to go as He reached down to us from His throne of glory, but hesitating to trust Him in His mystical Body in loneliness and weariness.

We have failed Him, and we are ashamed. We know we are not here to anticipate the glory of heaven ; we do not want to be fair-weather Christians, we desire to share Calvary and His Passion.

We are grateful to Him because He has waited for us, He has never been impatient with us, and yet we are ashamed. We want to get the feeling of shame deeper, right down into our will, that it may warn us against failure in the future, that we may be ready to follow Him in darkness, may get an instinct of responding to the heart of Jesus.

(2) We must be ashamed when we realize what other people expect of us. There is no one of whom more is expected than of you in this Community. You are to exhibit the joy of the Passion, to endure the common lot but with your eyes fixed on the sacred heart, to face the same conflict as in the world but with your hearts listening to the whisper of the heart of Jesus. Externally the fight is bitter, but internally it is pure joy, for you follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. The world expects it of you, and you fail, and so you are ashamed.

(3) We must be ashamed because of our sins, our self-will and all its fruits. The shame of sin ! dwell on it in the light of gratitude to the heart that never

grows weary. It must be the shame of love which loves Jesus and strives to walk with Him, not the shame of pride, of the proud will which has failed and gives up. It must be shame which truly esteems others better than ourselves because we know there is no one who has treated Jesus more shabbily than we have ; so that of our own accord we begin to take the lowest place.

3. Let us meditate on *Hope*, so that we may get it fixed into our hearts that hope is the very least we can give to our Lord. We are depressed, cast down at the knowledge of our sin, frightened at our experience of temptation, less reliant on self as our knowledge of life increases. And then Love leaps down from the throne of God, glorying triumphant over Satan, and asks me, feeble me, just to trust Him.

As every particle of matter is upheld by Him cannot I trust Him to uphold me, cannot I let Him work in me, let my will grip His will in a union that is never broken ? He asks me to endure the Cross, despising the shame with Him ; can I refuse Him ?

Think it out, your intellect confesses that every atom of the universe, all creatures, are upheld and safe in the hand of God ; and what about yourself ? Once and for all, what is it to be for yourself and the Community, what are you going to give Him ?

‘ Fear not little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’

‘ No man can pluck you out of His hand.’

‘ Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye believe in Me.’

‘ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.’

‘ Lo, I am with you alway.’

What is the least, then, that I can give Him? Is it not hope, my sure confidence in Him? Let us consider three grounds of hope.

(1) There is the surrender that love makes to the Beloved. You made it on your profession-day, that surrender which has its analogy in human marriage. It was for good and for evil, for sickness or for health. On that day we cast ourselves into the hands of our Lord, knowing very little of what the meaning of it might be, but convinced of His love, our one desire was to respond. Each year we go further in our self-committal of love. Blessed Mary, your Mother and His, grew in self-surrender from the time she accepted God's call and pondered it in her heart, till the day she saw Jesus go up; Mary the maid, first accepting the call and then learning by experience her relationship to her Son. Love surrendered itself to Love.

To lack hope, to be doubtful, to be worried and sad about to-morrow, is all a failure in love on our part, we are lacking in simplicity in our relationship to our Lord. We must not do it, it hurts Jesus when He asks our confidence and we refuse to give it. We need enough love to run risks for love's sake.

(2) The presence of Jesus within us is a sure ground of hope. This ought to remove all our sadness either about ourselves, or our work, or the Community. It is a sufficient answer surely. God in me, and so much in me that when I have given Him room in my heart He had never failed to work in me what He desired. So long as I was still and trusted Him He was able to accomplish His work in me. When things went wrong it was because I hindered Him. 'My presence shall go with thee.' How can I be cast down and worried?

When tempted to sadness let us fall back on the sense of His presence deep down within us.

(3) The last ground of hope is the love of Jesus which delights to pardon. We must never think that forgiveness is hard to win if once we are ashamed. We tremble as the years go on and our judgement draws nearer, for we know so little of God's standard for us. But one thing we do know, that God loves to pardon the children who love Him, and the heart of Jesus stands for pardon to the end of the world. Our attitude to God, the basis of our hope, is to be our sure confidence in His readiness to forgive. We must never think we cannot fulfil our vocation, or that we cannot become saints ; we must never hold back, but respond each moment, trusting Him.

It is the lack of hope that keeps us back ; what we need is blind trust in Jesus. We should all obey better if we were more hopeful, if we left things to Jesus more, if we trusted Him more absolutely.

In our attitude to the common life, in the spirit of true poverty, if only we really had hope it is wonderful what Jesus might do with us and in us.

These things are the A-B-C of the spiritual life, but as we see deeper into the heart of Jesus so we shall have more fervent gratitude, a deeper shame, and a stronger hope. To-day, as we watch Him and listen to His voice reminding us of our vocation, let us seek from Him these three gifts.

II

THE WARFARE OF THE SACRED HEART

LET us contemplate the victorious heart of Jesus risen, ascended, with power over the world, over the souls in purgatory, and over the saints in glory.

The special note for to-day is the power of the heart of Jesus. The warfare is not that of one who can be conquered, but of the great Conqueror Who, having conquered, is now advancing, slowly taking possession of the enemy's country. There is no chance of defeat. Let the Community realize this once for all, that there is no sadness or depression for one in the sacred heart ; everything else is either temptation of Satan or weakness in ourselves which has to be fought against.

1. Consider the cost to our Lord of His coming into the world. The heart of Jesus is the created manifestation of the Eternal Love of God which has existed always.

The special manifestation of that love to mankind began with our Lord ; from the time that Blessed Mary made her self-surrender the sacred heart began to exist.

What *did* it cost our Lord to come thus into this world ?

(1) *He speaks to us of the Cup and the Baptism.* ' The

cup that I drink . . . the baptism that I am baptized withal' (*S. Mark* x. 39). 'I have a baptism to be baptized with' (*S. Luke* xii. 50). Our Lord in creating for us the sacred heart was called into such union with the divine will that at every turn He was bound to come up against the rebellious will of the world, against the disobedient. He is baptized into the discipleship of obedience, the baptism of obedience, not once but continually. The Father holds up the cup of obedience, a bitter cup to any of the disobedient race who come to drink it, and none are found able to drink it but Jesus and those who follow Jesus afterwards.

That is the cost of creating the sacred heart : the Baptism and the Cup.

(2) '*Not peace but a sword*' (*S. Matt.* x. 34).

Consider how the sacred heart has brought into the world a principle of division, of hostility. 'I am come to send a sword.' We know from our own experience that the nearer we grow to our Lord, to His sacred heart, the more difficult it is to enter into the thought of the world, our conduct becomes less and less intelligible to the world. There is a principle of hostility to the world ; we cannot escape it, but our Lord was the first to reap the fruits of that principle, He Who was alone, deserted, betrayed, not so much because of deliberate malice but because of man's failure to understand.

(3) '*I came to cast fire upon the earth*' (*S. Luke* xii. 49).

The sacred heart brings into the world this fire, the principle of cleansing, the picture of obedient suffering, the fire that purges the sinner from sin. Our Lord tested the medicine which He proposed to use ; He

tested the suffering, tested it all. It all begins in the sacred heart ; the union of God and man and all the suffering it means, the dividing of the world, the principle of hostility and of division.

The warfare of the sacred heart can be summed up under these three principles : the cup, the sword of division, the fire that cleanses.

2. *The heart of Jesus has already conquered.*

Even while striving there is the sense of victory, as we find in S. Paul : ‘ I rejoice in my sufferings and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ ’ (*Col.* i. 24) ; ‘ The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of the strength of His might ’ (*Eph.* i. 19).

(1) His heart is the meeting-place of my will with the Father’s will ; in the heart of Jesus I am brought into that glorious will. Jesus is Son of God and Son of Mary, and by His mercy and pity I am lifted up into the sacred heart, into that wonderful divine union, into the fellowship of the Blessed Trinity. It is an unailing pledge of victory. Here I am getting to know my sin, my unworthiness, and my unprofitableness increasingly, and yet I have His pledge—the sacred heart was pierced that He might make a way for me to enter in ; He has stooped to lift me up, into that heart He has put me, I reign in the heart of Jesus, it is a pledge of growing union of heart and will. Here indeed we have the pledge of final victory, for either I am going to conquer or Jesus never loved me. The heart of Jesus is the conqueror, and nothing but my own apostasy can rob me of the victory. ‘ Lo, I am with you always.’

(2) His heart is *the* fountain of divine power, and

I am in it. I am *in* the healing pool of Bethesda, and I need no angel to come and disturb the waters, for my pool is of living water of life. Nothing can deprive me of His power, for I am in the heart of Jesus, and all His divine power is mine. Let it sink into my heart, this truth of salvation : ‘ He hath raised up a mighty salvation for us.’ ‘ With long life will I satisfy him and show him My salvation.’ God’s power works according to *His* wisdom, not according to ours ; the results of His power are often not what we expect, but they are always divine results of divine work. If only we will be patient and let God work we shall see His salvation. Let us cast away all heaviness, faint-heartedness, doubt, and mistrust, for the victorious heart of Jesus is my home in which I meet God, and in which the power of God lays hold upon me.

3. *Our Warfare.* What is it to which the sacred heart leads me ? The victory is already won, and you are in the army of Jesus, sent out by the victorious Leader to take possession of what is already His, of what will really be a fact when He begins to reign.

(1) All types of manhood must be redeemed, all different kinds of character and all people. All different types of character go to make up the race into which Jesus came as Leader, as Elder Brother. He wants all to be saved, the Gospel is sufficient for every type.

Each one of us is a priest on behalf of a certain type of character, each of us has got a different type to redeem for our Lord. First we offer for ourselves, and then we are able to offer for those like us, who are tempted where we are tempted, weak where we are weak, strong where we are strong. Our Lord, the Absolute Master and Victor, He the Conqueror, says, ‘ Now take

possession of the land which I have conquered, this certain type of mind, of will, of this way of thinking, this heart and body; take possession of it, of your whole humanity, be a priest for it, offer it, sacrifice it, not only win yourself for God but do it for those like you.' Knowing this makes such a difference. Behind us is the victorious Christ Who has not sent me into a far country to fight my way back to Him, but He is with me in every step I take, in me in all I do. In every victory I win, I help not only myself, but others who are one with me, those souls who are in the like difficulties and temptations.

And when we fail, we are not to be worried or depressed, but to look up to our Lord and say, 'You sent me to take possession and I have failed, I have forgotten and have fallen,' then we can make our act of shame and sorrow, and get up again, and go forward to take possession without losing hope, in perfect trust. The Victor is there just behind us, and in time, His own good time, He will carry us to perfect victory.

It is an awful feeling that Jesus is far off, and if our will gets wrong nothing can keep Him near but penitence; but if our will is right we know He is with us, and we must not be depressed or sad, for it hurts our Lord and it hurts our own life. We must take temptation as a thing our Lord sent us to redeem for Him, Jesus the Victor leading us right up to it, and holding our hand while we face it, and as long as we hold His hand we are not to be depressed even if we slip. Even if we fall, we must be humble about it and believe in the power of the Conqueror, believe that He forgives then and there, and so go on our way without heaviness.

(2) All circumstances have got to be redeemed. The

conditions of life vary so greatly, but all are to be brought into the sacred heart.

You, by God's providence, are in Africa, appointed by the sacred heart to be priests making real atonement for the circumstances of Africa, and the African people. He has not laid upon you an awful task and left you to fulfil it, but He has Himself, in His own Passion, won the victory and has the right to redeem all things. He has brought you here, and He will never leave you or forsake you. It may be that He is hiding Himself, but not that He has left you. You have to redeem the circumstances which surround the people here, claim them for God, and make them God's.

What are the circumstances of your life here ? There is the African in his heathen state in which the world, the flesh, and the devil are everything to him ; and there is the African in his Christian state in which religion draws him, but he is as yet far-off, he will not trust God, his faith is shallow. You have to redeem all that. Because of that you are here, it is why the sacred heart brought you here. 'Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.' Here you are as priests to redeem the circumstances of these Africans ; you are set over against the poor, beaten African to live a life in supernatural detachment from the world, to live in the supernatural order in absolute confidence in God, trusting Him even when it means division, separation, spiritual loneliness. To be confident and joyful with a faith that grows deeper day by day is the whole Reparation to which the Community is called. How are you to face it ? Are you going to allow that Jesus has sent you on ahead of Him, has bidden you to go out and endure far-off from Him, and if you are faithful,

if you persevere, He will allow you to come back to Him? No, you are bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, heart of His heart. It is He in you Who is redeeming the African, He stoops to lift the Cross, and He in you carries the Cross. Though He must hide Himself for the purification of your heart, though all *feeling* of His presence may be dried up, yet, as surely as He knew it upon the Cross, behind the veil there is the Father's presence. It is not as if you were carrying a heavy burden and you will be thankful when allowed to put it down, but Jesus is *in* you as you carry it, it is He Himself Who carries it.

(3) All aspects of our Lord's redemption are represented in the world. He came to reveal God to mankind, but the Jews learnt very little of God from Him for they were not able to understand. We marvel at the various aspects of our Lord's redemption, there are so many sides shown to us of His love. We see His gentleness, His mercy and pity, and yet there is His anger and scorn of hypocrisy ; we know His tenderness to the poor, and we listen to His hard words to the rich.

The saints each represent one aspect of our Lord's character, emphasizing, as it were, some one special feature of it, and the mystical Body will manifest the supreme and perfect character of Jesus its Head in the last great day.

In the Convent each one is called to manifest some different aspect of that character. It is not that we can choose and say, ' I will exhibit this or that aspect,' for we cannot analyse His character, but He wants each one to show something of Himself. He, unknown to us, makes use of us to show forth Himself to the world.

If He is to be able to use us in this way we have got

to trust Him with ourselves absolutely, completely. He will purge us and complete our character, and in doing it He will not spare us as He did not spare Himself. Probably it will be by the way that hurts ; we have all got to be hurt, the world is full of hurts. The Religious escapes from many of the hurts that people in the world have, but she has her own particular trials, and the more we give ourselves to prayer, the more God allows us to be hurt. The danger is, lest, not knowing the love of the sacred heart, we may become bitter. We must realize the love of the Conqueror to whom we have given ourselves, and that He is trying each moment to make us manifest His character, and because of this He allows us to be hurt.

There may be cold, dark prayer day after day, but let us never think such a blasphemous thought as that He has left us alone. In the sacred heart we can be patient, enduring, and truly joyful.

Let us at the feet of our Lord bewail all that has been untrustful in the past and make up our minds that He shall never see want of trust in us again. We will, as far as we can, be patient, enduring, and joyful, right on to the very end.

‘Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.’

‘Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.’

III

THE LIFE OF THE SACRED HEART

LET us consider the life of the sacred heart of Jesus as He is to-day, Jesus the Son of God and the Son of Mary.

There is a danger in the life of prayer lest we fashion to ourselves a Lord and Master of our own thoughts. To-day let us meditate on what we *know* He is to-day, let us consider Him in His threefold life.

1. *His rightful life of glory in heaven.*

When our Lord became incarnate He lived for thirty-three years under the limitations of earthly life as we know it ; the things which hold us down and keep us in were the things to which He submitted Himself ; all that makes the vision of the Eternal difficult to us Jesus took upon Himself.

In the Resurrection all earthly limitations vanished away, but since the Ascension till this moment He lives in the manifestation of the limitations of manhood. This double manifestation of the eternal life in the bosom of the Father and the life in manhood is age-long and never ceases.

In the Book of the Revelation we read of two Thrones given to our Lord ; He sits with the Father on His Throne as Eternal God, and He has the other Throne to which He will welcome us, the Throne that belongs to Him as glorified Man and victorious Saviour.

So that at this moment Jesus lives this dual life in heaven. Into the mystery of the life in the Godhead we dare not penetrate, but in the life of the glorified Manhood He reveals God to the universe and brings the universe to God. He reigns as King and ministers as Priest, upholding all things by the word of His power.

As King, He expects, waiting until the Church on earth shall win the final victory and all things shall be put under His feet. As Priest, His very presence there pleading for men *is* the continual sacrifice ; His presence makes intercession, continually presenting before the Father the obedience with which He obeyed when on earth, He the High Priest living there in the Holy Place for ever.

So we begin to understand how the visible and the invisible are mingled, how the eternal and the temporal meet. We can no longer separate the eternal from the earthly, for I am a member of that sacred heart, as far as I have any spiritual life at all it comes from the sacred heart. I have reached by His mercy the Ultimate, the Absolute, and what seems to be failure, pain, suffering, is really of no account, it is merely a veil soon to be rent in twain. For in fact I lean upon Him behind whom there is no other, the Creator, Jesus, the First and the Last and the Living One. The external things that depress and sadden are mere momentary accidents ; the truth is that the Eternal stooped down to me in the heart of Jesus, and lifted me up with my poor, feeble life and linked me on in the purpose of Jesus into the great life of the Son of Man. I have arrived there in Jesus, and though it will take years and years to get my will single, yet I myself am there. ‘ If any man open to Me I will

come in.' 'Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?'

It is good for us to look up to Him as He lives that life, for 'we see Jesus crowned with honour and glory.' In that word lies the certainty of victory ; it is the final hope of the human race.

This fact is independent of my feelings or my thoughts about it ; it is final, absolute : Jesus, the First-Fruit, holy and triumphant, and we to follow Him.

2. *His incarnate life in the mystical Body.*

When our Lord lived on earth He had nothing to do with a large number of the creatures on earth, in fact only a very few people got into intimate relations with Him. There were Mary and Joseph, and the brethren, the disciples, those having faith, but they were very few. When He cast away the earthly life of manhood and raised it to the supernatural, an increasing number of people were brought into relationship with Him : 'The Holy Ghost added to the Church daily.' And down the ages millions have been added, yet there are millions who do not enter into any relationship with our Lord as man through His Manhood, and millions have died without so entering. But in the day of His triumph, when He comes in His glory, all the saints will come with Him, and Mary also, His Mother and ours. We shall see the mystical Body in its entirety, and each member will behold God in his measure, by internal vision each will behold the invisible divine glory.

This Body is the expression of Jesus, the Son of God, and our Lord at this moment mystically lives in each member of the Church. This is a literal truth. In each one who has come to Him and found in Him new life, He lives, moves, and works ; with each one He

suffers in sympathy to-day. The same Christ, the King and Priest in glory, is actually present, dwelling in mystical union with each member of His Body.

As our High Priest our Lord offers our prayers and work to the Father, and as Jesus in me He prays and worships. It is only as I am in the sacred heart and lose myself in it that the motions of my soul to the Father are acceptable.

I want to meditate on my Lord as He is in men to-day, and in all His faithful people, and as He will be manifested in the mystical Body in the great day.

‘If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me.’

‘That He may dwell in us and we in Him.’

The whole truth of Mysticism, Christian Mysticism, depends on this manner of our Lord’s life, for in Mysticism the earthly looks for the heavenly, and believes it can be lost in the heavenly ; man looks to Jesus and believes he can be lost in God. With all my failings I may find myself clothed upon with the heavenly power and life so that for me there is no wall of partition between earth and heaven. The wall of partition is broken down, it is for me all Jesus, so that here and now the reality of my union with Jesus is so vivid that I am content to wait years and years before He takes the veil away if He wills it, for this mystical union has brought me to Jesus and it *is* all.

It is *necessary* for Him, my Master, necessary to His state of glory, to live in me ; it is *not* necessary for me to have light and joy and peace in my prayer. I am not to look at it from my side, in that way I do not count, but it is necessary to the sacred heart that He

should live in me. 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.'

We want to get it firmly fixed in our hearts, for it throws such light on what we have to suffer, for we open the door to Him and surrender to Him complete dominion over our heart and life. If light comes He brought it, if darkness He allowed it ; if peace comes He gave it, or if distractions He suffered it. I open the door and He enters in. All that I am concerned with is that He comes and sups with me and I with Him in mystic union.

This is the ground of my Recollection, that He is here right in the midst of me, so that there is no need for worrying because I cannot always remember Him, for He does not want me to make great mental efforts to meditate about Him, or still less to feel resentment if I fail. He is there all the time, He is trying to shine through. It is necessary to Him and to His love to live and work in me ; I fall back on this.

As it will be in the day of triumph, so it is to-day ; but with this difference, that in the resurrection body there will be an absence of the limitations of this body, no temptation, no sin, no effort in the looking to Jesus.

And why should there be anything else here but looking to Him ? If in temptation an immediate look to Jesus, or in failure immediately rising out of the failure by looking to Him.

Jesus neither deceives nor is deceived. We have not to distress ourselves in looking for Him ; it is a *necessity* of His life and love to live in us.

3. *The temporary manner of His life in the Sacrament.*

We must keep quite clear the absolute unity of our

Lord's life. His life is one ; it is not a different life in the Sacrament from the life in glory. But so long as we are on earth He requires, and we require, a special kind of relationship with Him. We are still in the limitations of earth, in danger of sin, engaged in the warfare of sin. (In purgatory there is no sin and no bodily limitation, so the relationship is of the mystical mode only.) We are creatures of sense, and in God's great mercy His relationship with us here on earth is expressed through the sacramental presence.

(1) What is it that our Lord accomplishes through the special manner of His presence in the Sacrament ?

As His presence in heaven *is* the Atonement, so in the Sacrament He gives to each earth-bound soul a means of contact with the one sufficient Sacrifice. To us, living amidst sin, that presence is made palpable and visible so that each soul may make it his own in the sacramental form. Just because we have got our body which has been redeemed, so the sacred heart, which is the Life of heaven, is made to be our Food and Drink, so that in our bodies we may have the Life of heaven. It is a temporary arrangement of our Lord's by which our bodies receive that Life.

Being human and of different nationalities and character we must have a visible bond of union binding us literally to the heart of Jesus, a bond which is visible from outside and which is also internal and unseen. And the Christ is the Bond of union, and for the Church on earth He gives us the sacramental visible bond.

When our living and glorified Lord comes to fulfil His relationship to you and to me He does not despise the sacramental mode of approaching us. But the sacramental life is not the sum total of His presence,

there are the three modes of His life, (a) in glory, (b) in the mystical Body, (c) in the sacramental presence.

The expression the 'Prisoner of the Tabernacle' is a poetical, not a theological, expression.

(2) Consider *the reality of our union* in the sacramental life. This is a vital matter to us who live in the darkness of earth amidst sin.

Think of the Mass as being truly an act of obedience of our Lord. He enters into the sacramental mode of life in obedience to the Father's will ; it represents the obedience of Calvary ; and each Mass ought to mean to us as perfect an obedience as we can manage.

There are twenty-four hours in which to prepare for Mass, and without set thought our Lord expects us to lay up twenty-four hours of obedience which He will gather from us in the next Mass and offer for us before the Father.

So Calvary is actually brought into touch with each moment of every day in each generation. All the obedience and self-restraint of the day are gathered up so that when our Lord comes with His obedience He finds us present in His obedience. This is the ideal.

Think of Communion as our point of contact with Christ in His mystical and sacramental life. Through Communion we live in Him and He in us ; He links us on with the saints and the whole mystical Body. Through the power of Communion we really live in mystical life in Christ. Think of the desire of our Lord for us in Communion : 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.'

As we grow in the knowledge of our unworthiness and failures we get frightened sometimes at such frequent Communion. This is a just point of view, but

it has in it an element of self. The right point of view is the desire of the sacred heart, so let us consider the necessity of the heart of Jesus to give Himself to us. 'With desire I have desired.' He has chosen you, and the daily Communion is in no sense an act of presumption. When allowed it, rejoice exceedingly, and in all gratitude and readiness give Him all you are and have. You open the door and surrender the dominion of your heart to Jesus. What He brings you is a matter you leave to Him ; we ought not to expect that He is going to give us always sensible devotion and joy. We are not children, we do not require to be pampered to make us faithful, we want to be able to obey and trust Him in dryness and darkness. We do not judge our Guest, we leave all in His hands ; we go to Jesus to please Him because He calls us, and He shall do exactly as He pleases with us. 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord.'

All that we are concerned about in our Communions is that we do not go in a state of mortal sin, but with great penitence and humility, with real preparation of heart and will ; that our thanksgiving and recollectedness afterwards be as good as we can possibly make it ; with that we go.

This is the beginning, and of the end of Communion none can speak, for if it is the point of contact with Jesus and the soul, there *is* no end.

4. *Our Lord in the Tabernacle.* The Tabernacle is the vision of God modified by, and on the level of, our earthly darkness. It is the vision of Jesus for one still on the Cross with Jesus.

Here is the presence that makes atonement, but veiled, doubly veiled, and partially hidden from us by our own darkness, yet the same presence.

Blessed Mary looks straight into the face of her Son to-day, and that same Son enables me to behold in the Blessed Sacrament Himself as He is in glory. The vision of Him is veiled because I am on the earth and earthly, because of my sin, and the darkness of sin. But it is ultimately and essentially the same vision. If my death coincided with the Last Day, and at one moment the veil of my flesh were to be done away and at the same moment the sacramental forms were done away, I should see Jesus in glory as Mary sees Him to-day.

I who am partially blind abide with this help to partial vision, and His presence in the Tabernacle is just what befits me on the Cross. This gentle, shaded Vision is what I need as a help to my faith and not too great a strain on my understanding.

Let us seek to gain from Him continually the sense of His presence, that we may pass from strength to strength till we behold Jesus face to face.

Let us take all hope, all comfort, all strength, as we behold Jesus there in glory in the Tabernacle of our humiliation.

IV

THE SORROW OF THE SACRED HEART

WE shall meditate on the sorrowful heart of Jesus so that we may get some understanding of what true sorrow is that 'worketh repentance,' and what is the ungodly sorrow which is selfish. We shall learn this from the sacred heart.

1. Let us consider *what the Gospels tell us of the sorrows of Jesus*. (1) Speaking generally, our Lord's sorrow was for the dishonour sin had done to God. Because of that He had come and had accepted a state which brought sorrow and suffering. Behind all His activity lay the heart in continual communion with the Father, accepting all difficulties as a sacrifice of reparation to the Father, whether of hard labour, of long nights of prayer, or of man's rejection of Him. He refused to take into His heart the things which hurt *Him* because that heart was so filled with love to the Father : 'Father, forgive them.' 'I and My Father are one.' 'I looked and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold.' It is the sacred heart alone that helps and upholds, that enters into the mind of the Father and in love makes reparation.

(2) Our Lord grieves for man's self-deception and for the loss he was bringing on himself. We see Him weeping over Jerusalem, and at the grave of Lazarus ;

weeping because of their lack of faith, their lack of understanding of God's power. We see Him sorrowing over His disciples, 'One of you shall betray Me.' It goes back to the essential meaning of the Incarnation : 'Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven.' 'Behold the Lamb of God.' 'Ye will not come to Me that ye may have life.' 'Ye shall die in your sins.'

(3) Consider His great sorrow over those who rejected Him, those who are typical of the wide world. His sorrow before the Passion was not conceivably because of the death He was to die and the horror of it ; for that reason He did not struggle for three hours in Gethsemane. His great grief there was over sin itself, which was coming to its head and crown in the rejection of God in the world. See our Lord going out across the brook into the garden, watch Him in His strange agony which lasted some hours, an agony so unspeakable that S. Luke likens it to a sweat of blood, as for three hours He prayed : 'If it be possible let this cup pass, but if it be God's will that I drink it let that will be done.'

That agony has no fellow in the history of the world ; it can only be explained as perfect selfless sorrow, as He, self-forgetting, accepted the responsibility of His brother-man's rejection of Him and of His Father, and gave Himself to make reparation for it to the Father on the Cross. There is not a tinge of self in Gethsemane. It is the chief thing that a Religious should have in mind about sorrow that worketh repentance. We think of the Romans and the Jews binding Jesus, rejecting God in the name of the human race, and all the sorrow in His heart is for the Father whom

they reject and for those who reject Him. In Gethsemane He was preparing Himself for that rejection, for the hiding of the Father's face, when even S. Peter denied Him, and S. John was afar off ; when He lost for a moment the vision of God, holding on only in His will ; but the sorrow of Jesus, of the sacred heart, is selfless, pure, single, it is the model of all true sorrow.

(4) Our Lord sorrowed too for those who grieved for Him. We know this not only from what He said to the women of Jerusalem, but because of what we know of His personality. As we watch our Lady and S. John and the women at the Cross, and see their grief, we know quite well that Jesus understood it and helped them to bear it ; and all that in addition to what He Himself was bearing. We can guess something of it from our own natural sympathy with others, and His is not less than ours, and how much more He only knows, for His sympathy is entirely selfless.

And you, dedicated to the Sacred Passion, have always before you day by day, as you commune with the sacred heart, the picture of selfless sorrow, all for God and for man, of sympathy in which there is no self, but which is all love, and love at the highest. There is no godly sorrow unless there be this love which has forgotten itself.

2. Let us now think of the *sorrow and pain that Jesus meets in us, and our fellowship with His Passion.*

Remember that here we are in the dark, so we need to be careful ; but we may think of His union with us in suffering in three ways. There are three kinds of sorrow in us that our Lord will bear.

(1) Our Lord, Who is in glory, still suffers for the love of God in us. Our Lord is impassible, He cannot

suffer as He suffered on earth. But as the Lord in glory meets us in the sacramental mode of life, and seems to be entirely conditioned by natural laws, so it is equally true that He, in glory mystically united to us by sympathy and infusion of grace into hearts, is so one with us that He helps us to suffer, to be sorrowful, and to endure ; that He carries our griefs and our sorrows. Any sorrow that we suffer for the love of God, in that we have the fellowship of Jesus. His pattern is set before us that we may learn to sorrow for the dishonour done to God by sin. Calvary is reproduced in all those sufferings which Calvary stood for and is evidence of. Our Lord asks of each generation that His members should offer themselves to Him, that in them and through them He should offer sorrow and endurance to the Father for dishonour done to Him by sin. That is our vocation, the real corporate Reparation offered by our Community. If I want to know whether the sorrow I feel is really part of the sacrifice of Jesus, and can be added by Him to His own sacrifice, I must see whether it has this mark all over it of sorrow for the love of God.

(2) Our Lord also carries our sorrow if it is marked by a real love of souls. He desires to reproduce in each generation what He felt on Calvary and what was expressed there when He thirsted for the souls of men. This sorrow comes to us from Jesus ; it is His gift, His vocation ; and it comes to us not so much in external ways as in internal, for it is in the interior sufferings that sorrow most truly exists. Gethsemane hurt our Lord more than the scourging or the piercing of the nails. Many have borne like scourging out of pride, the martyrs bore it from love, but Jesus only

suffered, as He did in Gethsemane, the pains of interior love.

(3) His love for us gives us fellowship with His sufferings even when we are only attempting to endure, if we are honestly attempting it as unselfishly as we can. If so, we can depend on His love, we can have true fellowship with Him, and He helps us to carry our pain.

So we have it : love of God, love of man, and endurance admit us to fellowship with His Passion, but in no other kind of sorrow have we fellowship with Christ's sufferings. Depression is not in that fellowship ; it is of self. Jesus feels for me in it, and helps me and disciplines me, but it is not in the fellowship of His Passion. Pain of half-formulated discontent, half-articulated distrust, is outside the sphere of His Passion, for it is of self. True, honest attempt to conquer such pain is inside the fellowship, but other than that it is mere waste of time ; it may be natural, it may not be mortal sin, but it might be the seed of something that is very bad.

What does my Master require of me in order that the sacrifice of sorrow may be kept up ? He requires the love of God, love of man, and endurance ; the honest attempt to bear all for Jesus' sake. And what may I not cast on the fire to be burnt up ? Moodiness, discontent, grudging, have no place in this sacrifice ; it must be fed by surrender of self. Legitimate sorrow is sorrow *in* Jesus that we would not choose to part with if we had the choice, and in that lies our sacrifice ; anything beyond that is illegitimate. It is a great thing to know what is illegal, and when our Lord says a thing is wrong He means to deliver us from it and the bondage of it. The victory over ungodly

sorrow is the entrance into the right kind of suffering, and the first beginning of godly sorrow is joyful contentment. This ungodly sorrow is bound to come, for Satan wants to rob Calvary of its fruit. We are human, and the breaking of our human will is a most difficult and painful thing ; but it is only by going through it that we can redeem it, reject it, and cast it out. We cannot win unless we go through the battle.

The sorrow of the heart of Jesus, what is it ? And the sorrow of the world, what is it ? Face the inward rebellion and refuse to choose your own way. Take Jesus to-day, the Incarnate Love, the Divine Word, as your Master, and wheresoever you have been tempted in the past to be depressed or cast down, make your peace now with Him.

Compare Mother Julian : ‘ Nay, I may not : for Thou art my heaven.’

V

THE LOVE OF BLESSED MARY, THE MOTHER OF THE SACRED HEART, AND OUR MOTHER

1. **L**ET us consider *how Blessed Mary is indeed our real Mother by adoption and by grace.*

All my life and hope is in the Manhood of Jesus, the Body and Blood ; all my spiritual life I have from Jesus, the Son of Mary. So really and literally Mary's relationship with me down the ages is that of the mother of all that in me is eternal. It all began with the young girl whose whole love was fixed on the Infant Jesus ; she who loves and serves the universe in her Son was once the maiden who loved only Jesus, and who accepted her vocation from God not knowing its full meaning, not guessing its universal power and redemption.

(1) Let us consider the *love of Mary for God.* Though we know very little of our Lady, yet the Gospel shows us that she was entirely devoted to God, and was one of those waiting for the Messiah wholly under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We can only guess at her love by the fruit of it, by the response she made in the day of her call, ' Be it unto me according to thy word.' That entire and absolute self-committal, that refusal to count the cost, could only be the fruit

of love passing all, of one who loved God above all, above the world and Joseph and her reputation, for whom it was God and God only. If she had sat down and thought of the future and of what people would say, and the awful pain and grief of being misunderstood, what would the result have been ? But she loved God, and it was joy to her to do what God told her at the moment.

(2) *Mary's love for her Son.* It was really maternal, truly human, all the love of the best Mother for the best Son. We can only dimly imagine it. It made her quite willing to take the second place ; on earth she was all in all to Him, but there was One Who was above. ' Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business ? ' And Mary wondered ; all the while that He was subject to her she knew that suddenly a great testing would come, that the sword would pierce her very heart. There were those thirty years of perfect maternal love. Then came the Ministry, the beginning of separation, and Mary is left in the background while Jesus is doing all the things that an orthodox Jew should not have done, and the sons of Joseph are murmuring and wondering what troubles Jesus is bringing on the family. When they go to seize Him Mary goes with them ' pondering ' ; she goes to see that her Son is not hurt or wounded by them. Then comes the end ; there is no mention of the Mother while Jesus is alone with the Twelve and in Gethsemane, we can only guess what had passed between Jesus and her when we find her standing beneath the Cross. We can measure somewhat the strength of her love as she stands there ; *she* had not forsaken Him nor fled, so wonderful is the trust of Mary in Jesus. ' Woman, behold thy son.'

‘From that hour that disciple took her to his own house.’ There is complete self-committal, absolute, limitless trust. Because she loved Him, she knew ; and knowing Him nothing could dismay her. There is the Son and the Mother, and between them the invisible link of perfect love. There is the visible wall of separation : the Romans, the malice of the Jewish Church, the Cross, the nails and the spear ; there is the darkness, but the invisible link of love was not even strained, much less did it snap. Such is the love of Mary for Jesus when on earth.

(3) *Her love for the disciples of Jesus.*

The soul that most truly loved Jesus is she whose name is Mother. It is Mary, the perfect Mother, who is our example in the matter of loving ; loving God beyond all things and entirely devoted to her Son, yet all the time loving and serving the disciples of that Son. We cannot prove it because we are told so little, but the truth of it strikes one suddenly as one thinks of Mary.

Jesus on the Cross, looking down on the face of her who loved with a perfect love, does not tell her to be detached, to be enclosed, but most deliberately tells her to go back to family life. If any one could have lived the solitary life it was Mary the Mother, but this is not the kind of example Jesus gave us from the Cross.

After the Resurrection Mary is there in her place with the disciples, during the three days of darkness it was she who ministered to them ; Mary was their stand-by, their comfort.

After the Ascension we see her in her rightful place in the Upper Room, that was her ministry until her Son took her. To her they came with their questions

about the beginning of things, about the Incarnation. They learned from her lips of Joseph and herself and of the early life of Jesus. It was she who comforted them and strengthened them, who ministered to them and loved them. Above all to S. John ; she took the place of Jesus, they lived together, both entirely devoted to Jesus, as mother and son, those two hearts most intimate with our Lord.

This is the love of Mary in its component parts as far as we can analyse it.

2. *The love of a Religious.*

(1) The end of all love is the Invisible Godhead, to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The vision of the Godhead will be perfectly revealed in the day when the mystical Body is complete, and for that we wait. Each soul in its measure beholds God through the knowledge which obedience brings, but we cannot guess what that vision will be when the whole Body is made up and the Mediator stands in His mystical Body revealing the secrets of the Godhead. We can contemplate it, but we cannot put it into words. We know that the end of our love is the Invisible, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, the light which shines in the face of Jesus Christ and will shine in the face of the Bride of Christ, the Church, when she is perfected. In prayer we are sometimes given a foretaste of the vision when we rest on the Eternal, the Invisible, when we dimly realize that God is my God and my All.

(2) The way to the goal. This wants prayer, not thought. 'I am the Way.' Jesus in His Manhood, God Incarnate. In the measure that we love Jesus we shall be fit for the vision of the Godhead when it is

revealed. This vision begins here on earth, this love for the Son of Mary is to us the way, for it is Jesus in His Manhood, in the Blessed Sacrament.

3. *The Community.*

Love cannot pass back to God except by the way of ministry. 'I came not to be ministered unto but to minister.' They are the words of God. We cannot love God with the love He gives us unless it go back to Him by the way of those He has given us to serve. The love of God is not ever confined to two, it is essentially a social love. The fellowship of the Holy Ghost is a fellowship of the Three in divine love. When we pray that we may be taken into the fellowship of the Holy Ghost we pray that we may be taken up into a love that is social : God and my soul, and those whom God loves. Though on the surface it may seem that my love must go immediately back to Him in my prayer, yet in its essence my love cannot be selfish, it must include the rest. This is expressed for us in the love of Mary, her love on earth and in heaven. There she is at the feet of her Son, her very life the love she bears Him, and yet her love comes back to Him heavy with the prayers and intercessions of all who love Mary and love Him. There is nothing selfish or solitary about the love of Mary.

So in the Community : 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?' It is inconceivable that we can grow in the true love of Jesus unless at the same time we are growing in true love to one another.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, He Who is here, His grace filling the Convent, ready to help us to love. The love of God, that too is here, given to

each soul. And the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, that also must be here increasingly.

Your heart filled with the love of Jesus which He gives you, and some of it returned to Him in direct communion and some in devotion to your Sisters, in the endeavour to make the common life joyful and quietly happy.

When you go into the Convent you are not set free from the burden of showing love to others, it is a mistake that some make. The perfect creature love is the love of Mary, and when we meet her in heaven we must not have been so intent on expressing our love to Jesus that we have not had time for love to the disciples of Jesus. Seeking God and God only is the one goal of pure love, and this balances all my affections. I want that whole-hearted devotion to the Bridegroom, to Jesus, and there are the brides of Jesus, I have to reverence them, to help and not to wound them. And yet I have to be so entirely devoted to Jesus that I am not hurt if I have to leave them, my love for them is in Jesus and for Jesus. I love them here and shall love them in purgatory and in heaven with an entirely spiritual love which has such power to keep me from being in the least selfish.

A Convent should not only have the atmosphere of communion with God but also of the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. I have not to meditate on how my Sisters treat me, but on how do I treat them. God has put me into the common life, here I am. ‘Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?’ Think it out, What is my duty to the common life? It is first and foremost to get rid of self, and resentment, quickness to take offence and to show it, anything affected or unnatural,

expecting people to give way to my opinion, a quick tongue, an angry look—these are all signs of oneself. And we do not get out of that by saying we are detached, and are loving Jesus only, that is the last place where He is to be found ; but outside of self in loving service, there I meet Him.

4. *False standards of love which may deceive us.*

(1) *Love in our feelings.* We need to remember that we are not responsible for our feelings in one sense, but we have to get control over them. We cannot like every one in the same degree ; while our affection is equal to all, our liking for them varies. We must not measure our love by our feelings, we are not to condemn ourselves while only a matter of feeling, and we do not accomplish the duty of love because we are by nature emotional. The whole matter is in the will, and the will is proved by our actions. If feeling a difficulty about a person, we obey our Lord and fight our feelings and strive to find that other one in Him, then He is satisfied. But if we pour out warmth of affection unwisely on some one person, there is a danger of the love being unbalanced and of hurting the common life. With love *in the will* we must serve as in the mystical Body of Christ. Feelings are not our concern, they do not count. If they are cold we should hide them, and if very warm moderate them.

(2) *Love that depends on being returned.* Who returned our Lord's love in any adequate sense, or our Lady's love ? Our goal is God, and the goal of our love is God incarnate. Look beyond the persons you have to serve to Jesus, and serve them in Him ; look to Him for response of love and to Him alone. Be indifferent to the response of love in the person served ;

if the response be there accept it thankfully, but if not, go straight to Jesus.

(3) *Love that ignores the Indwelling Christ.* All our love must be marked by reverence, reverence to Christ Who is in us. Anything merely sentimental is poison in a Convent. We must reverence one another, because of Christ in us.

Blessed Mary shows us love, and she warns us against all unbalanced love. We know the love we have to Mary is only a shadow of the love we must have to Jesus, but she must have her share, as also must the mystical Body. Our love is to be inclusive in its operation and exclusive in its goal. The way to it, the setting of that love, is for ever the mystical Body, and of that Body this Community is the outward and visible sign.

VI

THE SHELTER OF THE SACRED HEART ; AND THE REST THAT REMAINETH TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD

THE Christian Sabbath is the day of triumph for the heart of Jesus. Let us consider, then, the promises our Lord gave by the mouth of His servant John, in the authentic vision by which our Lord gave His message to the Church.

1. (*Rev. ii. 7.*) ‘To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.’

Consider the unity of our life in the sacred heart ; there is no break in it, the Paradise of God is for us the heart of Jesus, and the tree of life is the glorious Manhood of Jesus, the life of the God-man, for the healing of the nations.

The promise is this : to him that overcometh is guaranteed perfect interior union with Jesus in the last day. Then there will be nothing in me that is not from Jesus, all the powers of my being, I myself, will be lost in God ; that is the promise, to that I look forward as ‘the rest that remaineth for the people of God.’

That ‘rest’ begins *now*, the tree of life, e.g. the Manhood of Jesus is ours *now*, it is Jesus in me. This promise for the future carries with it the promise for

¹ This address was given on Sunday.

now. It is in indifference to the circumstances that surround the sacred heart that we find present peace in the midst of battle. It is the same sacred heart, the Paradise of God, where there is no sin.

Let us take the promise to ourselves to-day. Can I believe it? Can I believe that to me if I overcome to-day I shall be more in Jesus, shall find deeper shelter in the sacred heart, and that the promise is that I shall remain there till sin be done away? His heart becomes to me the Paradise of God.

2. (*Rev.* ii. 10, 11.) 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.' 'He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.' To be free from the powers of hell and damnation, to be crowned with life, that is the end promised to me. On earth there will be persecutions and trouble, 'tribulation ten days,' there beyond the grave I shall be crowned with life and shall have power in Jesus over sin and Satan and death. There is no curse there, because sin has no more power over the people of God. They are crowned with life, the life of Jesus. That is the future; what about the present? In the present we are in warfare, not yet crowned victor, but with the power of Jesus over sin and self. If in the last day I may stand at the right hand of Jesus and be crowned, I must also know how to stand in the midst of the battle, not yet crowned but victor over the enemy. There is a unity between the present and the future, an orderly, growing development because I am in the heart of Jesus. I want to lay hold of this power over sin, to believe that I have got it; in temptation to refuse to go under, but to call upon the power of Jesus, believing that His power can give me the victory.

For even here in the Convent all things are beginning to work together for that great day, and all the struggle against sin is so well worth while, it is such a mighty victory that is promised us. Though it is a struggle against sin, yet the sense of struggle should grow daily less as I come to understand more of my shelter in the heart of Jesus ; He with me.

I want to be able to promise Him not to grow slack or weary or careless in the struggle against sin, for as He has prepared great things for me I want to use the power He has given me. We must be alert to use the power.

When shall we reach the crown of life ? We have not to wait till the last day to wear it. Some souls have but a little time of purging in purgatory ; they who really believe in the Lord Jesus, who refuse to be brought under the dominion of Satan, shall quickly pass to where they shall receive the crown. Purgatory is not necessary, it is only God's pity that made it. In the heart of Jesus we may find such shelter and such power that in one moment we may have gone to our crown. If any one is able to do this, surely it should be one who lives under the protection of the Religious Life, so cleansed by the discipline of the Convent that at the hour of death there is hardly anything left for purgatory to do.

Jesus my all.

‘To him that overcometh will I give the Crown of Life.’

3. (*Rev.* ii. 17.) ‘To him that overcometh will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it.’

The manna is the food of the traveller, and these words tell us of the spiritual journey. The promise is that in the Last Day there shall be the perfect satisfaction of our whole being in Jesus. 'With long life will I satisfy him.' 'He filleth the hungry soul.'

At the end of the journey there is to be perfect satisfaction, so that never for a moment shall I be conscious of anything but supreme happiness, joy, and satisfaction. My mind will be filled with the wisdom of God, my heart dominated by the love of God, my will entirely lost in the will of God, my senses completely satisfied with God and the things of God. And with that my own secret between myself and Jesus, the shining stone with the new name in the day when I am crowned by the Bridegroom, the name which no one knows but He Himself and me. This new name is the complete manifestation of you as you are to Jesus, something by which you are revealed, known to Jesus, and to Jesus only ; it contains your special experience all through your life, for in the measure in which you respond to Jesus He will give you the new name when He receives you and your experience. That experience, apart from sin and failure, will be summed up in your meeting with Him when He gives you the new name, a memorial of the secret and special relationship between you and Him.

That is the goal, and we are not very far from the starting-point ! What is the promise for to-day ? The Bridegroom is one and unchanging, and your heart is one and the same. There is enough to strengthen and establish you during your journey ; there is food for the weary traveller—Jesus Himself, the Hidden Manna, Jesus and you each day, each hour, Jesus and you

together working out the secret experience which will one day be made manifest.

How we ought to treasure His discipline, the things that hurt in His spiritual dealings with us. It is the Bridegroom and the Bride, and is not anything worth while if only He can give us the new name which He has designed for us from eternity? If only we can endure and trust Him while feeding on the Manna, that we may receive from Him the name He meant for us from the beginning! How awful to receive a name different from the name which Divine Wisdom meant for me, just because I had not faith and patience to endure!

Whenever anything hurts remember these words :
‘ I will give him a white stone and a new name.’

4. (*Rev.* ii. 26, 28.) ‘ To him that overcometh . . . to him will I give authority over the nations . . . and I will give him the Morning Star.’ The present ministry of the saints is the ministry to us on earth, and to the souls in purgatory, but what will be their ministry in the new heavens and the new earth it is difficult to understand.

We are to share the authority of the King of kings in the Great Day, to be His ministers, each with his or her own work, and to each He will give the Morning Star, i.e. Himself in His power to be used in their ministry. There may be a ministry to those who died in ignorance, who never heard the Gospel, we do not know. (In His parable our Lord speaks of power and authority being given over ten cities or over five.)

All the natural powers which God has given us are going to be used in this service, towards the fulfilment of the purposes of God. We see it now in the saints

and in Blessed Mary. What authority she has ! Whose prayers would you rather ask for than Mary's ; it is the normal expression of our hearts. ' Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.' She *has* authority over the nations, she has *got* the Morning Star.

Or the Apostles, think of S. Paul, the founder of so many Churches, what authority he has in the union of his will with that of Jesus in his prayer, and in his presence before Jesus, the Morning Star in his heart.

Think of all the saints, our patrons ; it is a literal truth that they have authority just in so far as their wills are one with the will of Jesus. They have entered into the joy and power of our Lord, they have authority not as substitutes for Jesus but as ministers of Jesus.

That is your goal, for it does not require a man to be canonized in order to have authority.

What of the present ? If all is one in the heart of Jesus have we any authority over the nations *now* in His heart ? Who can have more authority, more power in ruling in the heart of Jesus than the Religious before the Blessed Sacrament, making intercession for those whom Jesus loves ? She *has* authority over the nations.

There is the beginning, and the goal. Intercession time has its difficulties, but are they not worth while ? What are difficulties compared with the promise ? We are allowed here on earth a foretaste of the ministry of heaven ; the method may be different, but the essentials are one—the union of our will with the will of Jesus. Here there is unsatisfied desire, there desire is fulfilled ; here there is yearning hope, there hope is satisfied. In all your struggle to get your will right, and in all your

prayers for other people, remember the end : you are to have authority and power with and in Jesus. 'He that overcometh . . . to him will I give authority over the nations.'

5. (*Rev.* iii. 5.) 'He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments ; and I will in no wise blot out his name out of the book of life.'

'The white garments are the righteousness of the saints, made holy, sanctified, justified in Jesus. 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.' His wounds lie open before us, and our sins and our selves are to be completely clothed, covered over by Jesus and His holiness. There will be the public acknowledgement of us before the Father and the Father's angels. 'Grant that in the day of Thy appearing we may stand before Him as Thy children.'

It is a weary struggle to get ourselves clothed with the righteousness of Jesus, to bring each thought into captivity to the thoughts of Christ, to get the very expression of our face under control. There is the awful difficulty of getting so under the Christ that in the eyes of God we are seen only in Him, pure and holy. But what a promise !

In the Tribunal we bewail to tears the filthy rags in which we have clothed ourselves, and even then God might take us, and we should be amazed to find our rags covered over with Jesus and His righteousness. Unworthy though we feel before the priest yet we might be confessed by Jesus before God and the angels as a well-loved saint. Is it not worth while being weary and ashamed now ?

Remember there is no break between to-day and the Great Day, all is one in the heart of Jesus. We must

have unspeakable confidence in Jesus present with us, knowing that *to-day* He is confessing us before God and the angels, that *to-day* He is really clothing us with the white garments. In this confidence we are able to bear all things and to endure.

6. (*Rev.* iii. 12.) ‘He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out thence no more : and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God, and Mine own new name.’

It is the Beatific Vision. After all the changes and chances of this mortal life, to be for evermore fixed in the glorious heart of Jesus, before the Throne of God when time is finished with ; to have written upon you, impressed upon the very innermost part of your being, the name of God—this is to know God.

‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’
‘The name of the city of My God, new Jerusalem.’
This is to know the meaning of the mystical Body of Christ, and to know myself in relation with Jesus my Head and with the saints. ‘And Mine own new name.’
I shall know His new name, the name of Jesus, when He has finished the salvation of the world ; Jesus, Saviour, when there shall be no single will which is not subdued either by love or fear, whether in heaven or hell. There will then be no longer the revelation of Him as Conqueror, but as Jesus, the Prince of Peace, Who has subdued all things under His feet. In His benevolence He gives to each soul in his measure the new name of Jesus when there shall be nothing in the universe but Jesus and His mystical Body ; and those who rejected Him, but who in some way subjected

themselves to Him as their Master, when Satan is no more.

Think of it, of the promise of how you shall understand it all, of the victory of Jesus and how it was accomplished. His new name given to us and expressing His new glory in the day of His triumph. This is of the future. And for to-day? Where is the beginning of that glorious end? The name of God we cannot hope to understand here, but the earnest longing and hunger for God we can daily express before Him.

The name of the New Jerusalem we cannot at all understand, but here in the Community, in loving one another in communion with the saints and the departed, we can little by little go forward towards the knowledge of it.

The new name of Jesus, given to us as Pillars in the Temple of God, we cannot understand here, but for that which is the goal, the Beatific Vision, prayer is the starting-point, prayer in real supernatural effort of will and understanding. And union with God in perfect obedience is the end.

Grip hold of this, that you are a Pillar in the Chapel, in the Convent, in your cell. All the difficulties about prayer, the darkness and dryness, the disappointment and shame at failure, all are well worth bearing in a thousand times harder degree because the end is so glorious. I am to be a Pillar in the House of my God.

Never forget that the understanding must be educated, and that if the Spirit guides you to use the will, and acts of the will, in your prayer, instead of your understanding, you should try to feed the understanding, that you may have a background for the will, try in spiritual reading to read what is solid and good. The

vision of God is in understanding and will, and if we neglect understanding we tend to use the imagination and to manufacture for ourselves the facts of the spiritual life.

7. (*Rev. iii. 21.*) ‘He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My Throne.’

This promise is that I shall be so lost in the heart of Jesus as to be able to take an outside view of the whole universe in Him and through Him, I shall see the significance of things, sharing His Throne, knowing His mind.

Think of God bringing to Adam all things to be named, and the sons of Adam on the Throne sharing in the ruling of the universe, through the union of their minds with Jesus.

And here and now on earth the beginning of it is Recollection, for Recollection is nothing else than sitting with Jesus on a throne in the midst of the changes and chances of this world. ‘His heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord ; his heart is established and shall not fail.’

It is difficult even in the Convent to be recollected, and in some works it is specially difficult. The remedy for the difficulty is faith in Jesus, in the shelter of the sacred heart, believing that He can raise you to that level that you sit with Him on the Throne, that He can to-day give you Recollection and hope and strength with it.

Here then are these seven great promises. Think of them, pray about them, and in them you will find comfort and inspiration. For the heart of Jesus is the pledge and the power of internal union, here and now in the midst of temptation there is glory. And we are

in His heart. Do we want a more sure pledge than that, could we find anywhere a more divine power than that?

Then claim it, draw upon it, claim that internal union, comfort yourself with it, and for its sake endure.

‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them . . . and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. . . . Yea, I come quickly. Even so come, Lord Jesus.’

VII

THE SACRED HEART AS THE SCHOOL OF SANCTITY

LET us contemplate Jesus calling us to learn of Him: 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.'

Let us contemplate the two Apostles and their way of learning: 'They abode with Him.'

1. In this school there is only one prize, and it is God. It is given at the end of the school days, and for perseverance only. In the school of the sacred heart there are no bribes, no weak encouragements; now and again a cheerful word is given, but the least possible is given of that kind. We are encouraged to try for the supreme prize which is given to the persevering soul. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' We can see this from our knowledge of our Lord while on earth, in the sacred heart there was nothing else but God; sorrow and God, pain and God.

So we must grasp at the beginning that we are not to look out for weekly rewards for coming to school, or for encouragement and praise on every possible occasion. We *shall* see God, and we are to persevere until we see Him, nothing more, this only.

(1) In this school of perseverance there is my *mind* which must be tested and tried till God can see two things in it: (a) receptiveness of His teaching, and (b) a fixed intention of Recollection

(a) We are not told that we have to attain to a complete knowledge of God or of the Christian Faith in this world, it indeed is not possible ; but we *are* told that we are to try and get a mind prepared to be guided by the word of Jesus in His Church. We have got to struggle to learn, we have to endure doubts and difficulties, our minds and thoughts have to be tested and tried, until we are prepared to be guided by the mind of Jesus. There are many little difficulties in the mind that we shall never be rid of, they are often allowed that we may get the habit of looking at our Lord, so that when He calls us our minds are able to take in the vision of Jesus. We are learning this here on earth, and we shall be taught it in purgatory, this receptiveness of mind which we have to gain before we reach Paradise.

(b) We must have a fixed intention of Recollection. Why do our thoughts wander in prayer, and why do we find it difficult to be conscious of our Lord in our work ? It is partly due to bad habits and lack of concentration, and because we are human ; the world is interesting, and the visible more apparent than the invisible.

It is the reason why we are put to school, that we may learn to persevere in trying to be recollected, in the desire for recollection, in fixing the intention of remembering Jesus, and in shutting out other things. *When* our intention is fixed we gain the prize. Some people never learn it here, but if we persevere, by patience we do penance for past bad habits, and we do begin to acquire this fixed intention. If our Lord can say, 'This soul attends to Me,' He can do anything with it.

This time of learning is partly penance—we must

pay here or in purgatory—and it is partly discipline. Our Master does not look for complete knowledge or entire absence of wandering thoughts, but He looks for a receptive mind set towards God, loyal to the Church, and with fixed intention of struggling to be recollected. We are not to be alarmed because the temptations are many and the darkness often deep.

(2) Then there is the *heart* and its schooling. What does our Lord require of the heart here and in purgatory? Why is it continually torn this way and that? Our Lord wants to see three things in the heart :—

(a) The self-centre put under His dominion.

(b) A constant rejection of all dissipation of the affections.

(c) A positive attachment to Himself.

(a) This is why it is impossible for our Lord to leave us in constant enjoyment of daily sweetness and great spiritual peace. So strong is our self-centre that every moment of sweetness may tempt us to think He approves of us because we deserve it, and so He has to leave us practically dry in our hearts. The more He loves us, the more He is bound to afflict us.

(b) Living in a world of created things, the only way in which our Lord can really prove our love is by allowing these things to tempt us, to let them lay their spell on us, and for us to be tempted by them. Temptations from things of sense may grow less in extent but not in intensity. We have to face all the possibilities of loving them more than the Christ, and by rejecting them, give Him our love, which is then of supreme value to Him, though we may feel no fervour in our heart.

(c) Why is it, when we are longing to be detached, things come back to tempt us away from Christ? Why?

It is His way of teaching us to fill our hearts with Him only. Let me be very busy in thoughts of my Lord, let me attach my heart positively to Him, then the temptations to other things will become fewer, and when they come will have less power. I am not to sit with an empty heart which does not want sin and the world, but I am to sit with a full heart which says, My Lord and my All. We are still at school, and the learning is often dreary, but if we persevere the prize is ours. We shall see God.

(3) There is the *will*. The will has to be tested and made firm till God sees in it (a) penitential acceptance of the consequences of sin and of my own sin, and (b) a fixed resolve to follow His will in all things. Is it wonderful, then, that our wills are daily tempted and tried? Our Lord is longing to bring you to Him, and you are here in a very earthly world, and you cannot pass from here to Him until your will is absolutely one with the will of God. 'Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.'

He loves, and He does not afflict you willingly. What can He do? He has got to be certain that you understand Him and His work and His purpose for you, that you are a penitent after His example. He has to prove that you can go through all the things that men and women have been through with penitential acceptance of sorrow, dryness, and darkness. He does not look that you shall never slip, or that your penitence shall in itself redeem one single sin, but He expects that with your whole being you will accept the consequences of sin and of your own sin.

You are to gain a constant will to bear what Jesus bears, with Jesus, as He asks it of you in your measure, and so He must ask of you a fixed and constant intent to do the Father's will ; to pray simply for the sake of obeying God, to keep your Rule and do your work simply for the sake of obedience to God. In His love He will leave you months and years in dryness, proving your will. There may be no sense of enjoyment in the work, but your enjoyment is in doing the will of your Father in heaven. There are no bribes in this school, only the supreme reward. When you have been proved in mind, heart, and will, then the external things will disappear, and you will see God.

When life gets heavy, remember you are still at school, and you will never get out of school till you have won the prize. Love sent you to school, Love manages the school, and is longing to set you free from it when you are ready and when it suits His purpose.

2. The chief requirement in this school is *attention to detail*. Everything depends on the interior spirit shining out in the details of our life. For instance : Holy Rule sets before us a great ideal and is brought into touch with daily life in certain points. To fulfil it in perfection is beyond us, it *is* an ideal, but in the points in which it touches daily life the internal spirit is to shine out in detailed attention. There is no such thing as 'general' attention to the Rule, you cannot keep it in the spirit and break it in the letter. Our Lord, when He wanted to teach men to keep the spirit of the old Law, changed the letter of it. 'It hath been said.' '*I say.*' We must be careful about attention to detail or we hinder the work.

Obedience must be in detail. A general profession

of obedience is beautiful only so far as it goes with absolute detailed obedience. In obedience while at school there is a terrible strain on the heart that rebels against the claim of perfection, but to the heart that desires to be perfect it is a wonderful school. To the heart desiring to please Jesus in others, in the keeping of one's Rule, it is a wonderful life, a life in which one cannot please oneself.

Only we have to be careful about the details of obedience so that there shall never be a moment's hesitation in the heart of a Superior as to the obedience of any member. The Superior must be able to know that what is ordered will be accomplished, it may be with internal difficulty, but yet with cheerful surrender.

There must be *self-examination* with regard to detail. It may get very difficult and very wearisome, but we must remember we are at school. How long we shall stay there is according to God's will. If it should take months, or years, or generations to root out one particular sin, it does not matter, the prize is for perseverance.

If we fail we must remember that God is only looking to my intention, to my will ; He does not compare me with others. Gradually we shall get free, the bad habit will be broken, but we must not omit the morning oblation of ourselves or the daily examen, and we must refuse to be put off by weariness. We are in the school of the sacred heart, and it is the pride of this school to attend very much to detail. The Master looks to the interior spirit to shine out in the matter of detail, and this, which people in the world are apt to forget, is what the Religious in the Convent has time for, she is there for this purpose.

3. *The glory of this school is in the individual care of the Master.* There is no school in which the Master is so wrapped up in each one of His scholars as in the school of the sacred heart.

(1) Consider the *interior union of Love*. It begins on our Lord's side with His drawing us, in our conscience, in a sense of vocation, perhaps from the pressure of exterior circumstances He attracts us. We may not be conscious exactly of Him, but something impels us or drags us towards Him. There grows up within us a desire to please Him, though again we may not be conscious always of Him, but the desire is rooted in us. And then as we continue in His school we become conscious of His presence, and although for long stretches of time He hides Himself, yet we know deep down that He is with us ; there is the internal union which carries us through temptation and trial. Then there come those wonderful days when He draws back the veil, and in the power of those days we can go another forty days unto the Mount of God.

And so He leads us to this, that little by little His concerns become ours, we care for others for the sake of Jesus, we become interested in the Church and the world for the sake of Jesus. Out of the long discipline of intercessory prayer, of often compelling ourselves to pray, we hope to reach the simple union with Jesus in love, in which prayer ceases to be a burden, when detail becomes union, all becomes one vast desire, with the will fixed upon God, and the heart and mind one with Jesus. So that whether our prayer time be in Gethsemane or Calvary or the Mount of Transfiguration, the will is one, and the desire one ; the heart and mind

with Jesus in God. It is the Divine Master in internal union with His pupils.

(2) *Communion with the Master.* Morning after morning each scholar is called into the presence of the Master that he may receive the Master to himself. Preparation for this interview with the Master is of great importance, as is also recollectedness afterwards. Nothing in the way of public preparation, or of Office said together, can really take the place of internal preparation for this interview with our Lord. If it be a little bit hastened it is easily spoiled; it must be a really careful preparation in all penitence, gratitude, confidence, and desire. We must not ever anticipate what the Master will say or leave with us, we are not to be disappointed if our Communion be not one of great sensible sweetness. Even if at the moment of Communion there be a multitude of distractions, the Master is there and it is enough. If He wills to test us with distractions as He stands before us, though they may spoil the sense of His presence, yet if we reject them, we have given the Master what He desires from us. Afterwards if we are humble, and do not waste time in bemoaning ourselves, we can make up to our Lord anything lacking at the time of Communion, we can gain from Him what He brought and meant to give us.

Then there is the *imitation of the Master*; the desire to be recollected as the Master moves about with us in our work in our own little school-house in the great school of the sacred heart.

4. *The supreme test of the scholar's progress is prayer* And by this we mean prayer regarded as (a) desire, (b) surrender of the will, (c) mortification of all that hinders the will. Prayer in this sense is a true test of progress.

We are not to judge our prayer on the surface by our feelings about God, our thoughts of Him. The best prayer is prayer that expresses truest desire, a hunger and thirst, for this comes from the will and receives no help from the feelings or the mind. This is for comfort, for we are here that our Lord may teach us how to pray, and because He loves us He will go on with the instruction whether it hurt or not. No one can teach us but Jesus Himself. Books only write down the observations of men and women who had to do with people who had gifts of prayer, but we are to gain a *new* name which no one may know but Jesus and our own soul, so we are not likely to have exactly the same experience as others.

As we commit ourselves to our Lord in His school we are to be prepared for anything, and we are never to judge our prayer except by that which is essential—our desire, our will, and our mortification. We are to leave all the rest to our Lord.

It is very valuable that S. Theresa and others have written their experiences of prayer ; but we are not great saints, and our experience may be very different from theirs.

‘Into Thy hand I commend my spirit.’ Jesus will lead us, we must be hopeful and confident.

Beware of sloth, of getting dreamy, imagining that we are in the dark night of the soul, when really all we want is a little more burning desire and strength of will, for sometimes the darkness only comes from human slackness or weariness.

Let us be without sentiment in the matter of prayer. It is Jesus Who holds us, He will not let us fall or slip. ‘My Beloved is mine and I am His.’ ‘I will not let

'Thee go except Thou bless me.' 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee?'

It is the will that will carry us through our daily life attentive to our Lord, glad even when He hides His face. And remember, that though He may hide His face behind the veil, yet with both hands He holds the veil, and that His one desire is to rend it, and when our whole heart is filled with Him He *will* rend it.

For the sake of that certain hope let us endure joyfully the discipline of the school of the sacred heart.

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

LET us contemplate—

(a) The activity of the Holy Ghost in creation :
'The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.'

(b) The Holy Ghost separated by sin from the creature He had made : 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man.'

(c) The Holy Ghost descending on Jesus and driving Him into the wilderness.

(d) The descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

The gifts of the Spirit are seven great powers which the presence of the Holy Ghost within the soul gives us. The Eternal Spirit dwelling within the soul sanctifies it, so that sanctifying grace is the presence of the Holy Ghost within us. This presence is a source of power which makes it possible for us to develop the great virtues of faith, hope, and charity according to our measure, and to render to Jesus the fruits of the Spirit, the fruits of perfection.

In the Church we reckon these gifts as seven.

I

HOLY FEAR

(a) The Holy Ghost as Wisdom in creation is in the fall of man faced with the task of restoring what man has destroyed. From the moment God first

ordered creation and creation began, it has been the work of the Holy Spirit to make perfect in visible form all the thoughts of the divine mind. At first, when, according to the divine will, creation was accomplished and man appeared, he was perfect according to his then measure ; he was in his place in the order of the Holy Ghost ; he responded to the Holy Ghost. There was no break, no discord, in creation. God saw that it was very good. Then sin came, and the work of the Holy Ghost was to undo man's work of evil, to get round man, to head him off from his own destruction, and to bring him back.

In the Old Testament we see how the Holy Ghost tried to implant in man's heart the Fear of God. Moses, in the Law and through the Prophets, reveals to men the holiness of God, by showing them the reverence due to Him. In the ceremonial law of worship, and in the ritual law which survived right down to the time of our Lord, was taught the awfulness of God's holiness. In the Prophets, chiefly by the mouth of Ezekiel, man was taught about individual holiness : 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' In Isaiah there was the promise of one who should come, in whom the spirit of the Fear of the Lord should really dwell.

Then the Holy Spirit accomplished the miracle of the birth of John the Baptist, who was filled with the Fear of God, so filled, that he chose to dwell in the wilderness, apart, separate ; it is the key-note of his life. He was afraid of the world, afraid of sin, afraid of failing in his mission, and so he dwelt alone.

Holy Fear reached a higher, a more perfect, and a sweeter form in the birth of Mary, who dwelt among her own people and yet was filled with Holy Fear.

She is a very type of it ; a perfectly pure example of Holy Fear, which in her is not negative, not self-protected, but is simply a losing of herself in the love of God.

After Mary, the perfect work of the Holy Ghost is Jesus. In Him there is the perfect manhood with the perfect human will and heart. In Jesus the Holy Ghost has created not only the manhood of the perfect Son of God, but the manhood of the perfect Penitent, Who shall Himself alone bring back humanity to the Fear of God.

(b) *Wherein did the spirit of Holy Fear of the Lord Jesus consist ?* It was the perfect expression of sonship, for Holy Fear in its essence is something filial, it belongs to a son. There was in Jesus : (1) *Overwhelming reverence for the Father's presence.* Before the Apostles began to suspect Him to be the Christ, the Son of God, they were really overwhelmed by the manner in which Jesus showed His consciousness of the Father's presence. During those three years there was the complete consciousness of the Father's presence, and this permeated His life ; apart from this He had not one single thought or purpose. His worship, His life of prayer, the service He did, the ministry He fulfilled, were all entirely marked by the sense of the Father's presence. 'I and My Father are one.' 'The Son can do *nothing* but what He seeth the Father do.'

(2) *His complete submission to His Father, to a higher will.* It was *the* distinguishing mark of the Christ. Not for a single second of His existence could you say that He thought or wished or did anything which was not His Father's will for Him to think or wish or do.

(3) *An absolute dependence on His Father.* He looked

to no one but His Father ; the whole Manhood of Jesus learns to depend on the Father, and as the need grows greater the sense of His dependence is made more evident to us.

The Holy Spirit gave to Jesus the spirit of Holy Fear. For over against all the rebellious, the selfish, and the faithless, stands the One, perfect in reverence in the Father's presence, perfectly submissive in will, with confident dependence in love. He Who so stands wipes out the guilt of sin, undoes the evil which rebellion causes, and establishes Himself as the Centre of obedience to the trusting children of God.

The Holy Ghost is triumphant in the Manhood of Jesus.

(c) *What does this mean to us ?* For what did Jesus offer penitence in the power of the Spirit ?

1. *For sin.* How did Jesus look upon sin ? There are many ways of talking and of thinking about sin, and there is a tendency to make less of it than of old. In its essence sin is a positive evil that denies God and seeks to abolish God. It is true that it exists only in the human will, but it is a positive thing which attacks God and tries to cheat Him out of His own empire. Jesus, as the Eternal Son, takes flesh and comes into the world to fight for His Father's glory. There He is, He Who loves us, and over against Him stands the power which makes for the abolition of the love of God from men's hearts. We have made our choice long ago, we have chosen Jesus and determined to fight against sin, but we forget and we grow accustomed to little sins, we get used to sin round about us and within us. The first meaning of penitence is, in a way, dimmed in our hearts.

We want to get back to the real meaning of sin and penitence as Jesus saw it. We know He became the perfect Penitent by destroying sin, and enticing back to the Father the rebellious wills of men. And He is still the perfect Penitent, and in Holy Mass He is continually enticing men back to God. We want this to sink into the very ground of our hearts, and to try and realize what sin would do if left to itself.

2. *For my sin.* Is it not an oppressive thought that, even when a Community is founded to commemorate the Passion of Jesus, it would be intolerable in God's sight were it not for the penitence of Jesus ; that the very best Communities in the world joined together in endeavour would, apart from the penitence of Jesus, be intolerable ? He is making atonement for the very things which you are doing in order to make atonement for your own sins and for the sins of others. Do we believe it ? Yes ; but is it real to us, for it means our individual sin ?

(d) *Our penitence.* The Holy Ghost in us gives us the spirit of Holy Fear, in Baptism making us members of the incarnate Christ, and from then right onward He is in us, and all His powers are ours. They are renewed in Confirmation, strengthened and increased according to our need, for our vocation and profession. Why ? That we may become penitent, may be truly filled with the spirit of Holy Fear. That is why He has guided you to your vocation in your Community, that you may become a true penitent. Your vocation holds up to you the ideal of penitence for your own sins, and for those of Africa. In the spirit of our Community, in the very letter of our Holy Rule, we are bidden to live in confidence in the Father's love, in utter sub-

mission always at the feet of Jesus, and we are given the power to live joyfully in the wilderness with Jesus.

There are *things, however, which hinder our penitence*, hinder the development of our personal penitence. There are typical sins and temptations of the Religious, and we must bring them under the power of Holy Fear.

1. *There is the temptation to selfishness, to self-assertion.* There are our mixed motives, and while our best motives become an active power in our lives, our mixed motives, if they do not die out, begin to bear fruit and to spoil the unity of our life. We are to blame if they are unresisted, if they continue actively within us. There must be no self-consideration, only complete submission to our Father's will. As with Jesus; if called to rule, He accepts; or if mocked, spat upon, and despised, He accepts. There is no self in it; only this one motive, to do the Father's will. And I am called to stand by His side, to spend my life for the people, to offer officially atonement with Him, and I know that I have many motives working within me besides the pure will of God. Am I penitent about that?

2. *There is the temptation to despondency*, to lose hope and heart, and this kills perfect confidence in God. Jesus, perfectly dependent, goes to Calvary, and I am called to glorify God by depending on Him in the darkness. 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.' We accept it as a general proposition, but S. Paul was speaking out of his experience of a very dark night of the soul. He knew what it was to long for God and not to find Him, to suffer in every conceivable way, and out of his own wide

experience he tells us this, for he had the secret of redeeming evil things and making them opportunities for trusting God. As we look back on the thousands of opportunities which Satan and the contrary world have provided had we only taken them, we need to stir up our penitence, for though each little lost opportunity may not seem very serious, yet it is all a matter of knowledge. 'Of whom much is given much will be required.' I won't be afraid of the dark night, for it is my opportunity of union with the true Penitent in the spirit of Holy Fear.

3 *There is the temptation to instability.* 'Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.' This temptation has got many names, but in its essence it is the opposite of reverence for God's presence ; it is the inability to find God in the circumstances that *are*, and therefore being impatient and seeking other circumstances in which perchance God may be found. It is a real temptation, the old monks knew it and so do we of this age. In the world it means everlasting seeking for new forms of amusement to escape from thinking of one's own soul. In religion it does not seem so terrible as that to the outward eye, but it *is* terrible, because God cannot depend on us, for if we do not depend on Him within us, we do not reverence Him where He is and think we shall find Him better in some other way. It covers the whole of life, it turns up in prayer, in the desire for a new method, seeking for a cure on the surface rather than within. We see it in priests desiring to change their parish, in other souls who think their surroundings the cause of the evil. We see it in the Cloister : the Religious not liking to be alone, wanting a change, considering some work not suitable to prayer. The

human analogy is that of a wife criticizing the way her husband's house is ordered, and seen as this one's whole soul revolts, and pleads finality as the only safeguard.

We want complete reverence for God, complete confidence in God, and complete submission to God's will *now* at this time. This is stability, the pit blasted into the rock in which the standard is set.

Let us in our life of prayer unite ourselves once more to Jesus the perfect Penitent, Who never desired anything in His life to be changed, whose prayer became deeper and better as His external life became more and more impossible, and whose last prayer on this side of the grave was in the thick darkness of the Cross, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit'

II

GODLINESS

LET us contemplate—

(a) The divided will of the first woman Eve, her will divided between God and her own passions.

(b) The entire surrender of the most pure heart of Mary : ‘ Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.’

(c) The heart of Jesus abandoned to the will of God. And, for our encouragement,

(d) The Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, a bride adorned for her husband, the triumph of whole-hearted love.

Godliness or Piety is the second gift of the Spirit. We think of the power of God as that which is restoring all things, a power which is needed in the world because men’s hearts are divided in their allegiance. This power of God gives us Piety, which is the fulfilling of the duty of the son to the father ; it includes all the relationships of man’s home. In the heavenly family, in the household of God, it is called Godliness. This power we need to enable us with whole-hearted love to fulfil our duties in the Christian household.

Think of the Holy Ghost finding in Adam and Eve His beautiful order and *cosmos* ruined, and providing a new Centre of unity, triumphing in typical instances,

preparing men little by little for the heart of Jesus to be the Centre of piety.

There is Abraham trusting God in sacrificing Isaac his son, the hope of the human race, trusting God to provide, to raise him from the dead. Here we get a glimpse of real piety.

We see Joseph, who from our standpoint knew so little and yet had such a wonderfully united, disciplined heart, forgiving his brethren in the court of Egypt, forgiving those who had so wronged him. This is a triumph of the Holy Ghost.

There is Moses, whose whole-hearted devotion to God made him prefer banishment and exile with his people to all the glory of Egypt. Think of him bearing with his people, ready to be struck dead by God if only they might reach the Promised Land.

Elijah is another triumph of the Holy Ghost, he whose love trembled for the moment, whose love was not quite big enough to face failure, tempted to become bitter against his people. Yet God puts it right for him, and Elijah takes heart and goes back at God's word to finish the work.

These are typical instances of what the Holy Spirit did accomplish, and yet none of these was anything like a real centre of piety to other men.

We come down the ages to Jesus, to the sacred heart, the truly pious heart of the Eternal Son, to whom piety is essential. There He stands, and His truly human heart is filled with piety towards His Father and to us the children of God. Dwell on the sacred heart of Jesus from that point of view. There are two marvellous things about the Son of Mary for us to consider :—

1. In all true filial piety He has entered into the

mystery of *divine endurance*. The philosophers say that the great mystery about God is the divine will as limited by our free will, which is the same as this mystery of endurance of which we are speaking. He limits Himself that we may go our own way ; that we may have the freedom of our will, He endures everything. Generally we just take this for granted, and then something extraordinary happens, and we realize how all down the ages God has endured. The nature of His endurance, whether of patience or wounded love we do not know, but Jesus knew and shared it. He entered right into the divine endurance. Hence His whole human life is marked with grief and sorrow, for the Son has nothing that He does not share with the Father, His human heart reflects what is in the Father.

Interpret His ministry, the Passion, His life in the Blessed Sacrament, in the light of the endurance of God, for this is the chief element in the piety of Jesus, the Son of Mary. He was born into the world, true Man among men, yet every moment willingly and consciously making Himself different from men, because the great reality in the mind of Jesus was His Father enduring the sins of men, and therefore as a true Son concentrating Himself upon endurance with His Father and surrendering His rights as man. He reaches the crown of His ideal when men stripped Him and nailed Him to the Cross. He was then most in sympathy with the divine endurance, most different from any other human being who lived a mere human life, for He was then most fully abandoned to God Who endures.

2. Our Lord understood what divine healing was, and bringing His human heart and body to the feet of

God He threw Himself into the work of healing, became one with the divine purpose of healing. 'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' 'I am come that ye might have life.' We forget what the divine task is, we look forward to the restoring of all things, and in moments of fervour we are linked up with God, but we forget the ministry of healing. Here was One Who so fully entered into this divine purpose that at any moment you took Him you would find Him conscious of it, conscious that He was out in the world with God healing, and that each moment mattered. Such was the love of the heart of Jesus for God. He gave Himself freely to the people, He never considered Himself but only the interests of the Father, He laboured those three years, He drank the cup to the very dregs and gave His life a ransom. And He continues in the Blessed Sacrament to give Himself, to abandon Himself to men, so that under the form of Bread and Wine He dwells throughout the ages.

There is true piety, there is the ideal of Godliness : the power of entering into God's endurance and of His purpose of healing the world.

What is the power of Piety in us ? How are we to use it ?

1. We are to abandon ourselves to God. Abandonment to God means being united with God, and independent of anything external, to lose oneself in God so that He can make us what He wants us to be. The old analogy is the best, that of liquid poured into a vessel. *We* lay great stress on the vessels, but all the stress should be laid on the liquid inside. The vessels may be different, but they contain the liquid. My soul is as liquid at

God's disposal, and He picks and chooses from the circumstances of my life and from my past, that He may mould me to the perfection He wished for me from the beginning. My work is to let God mould the vessel, my business is to remain *in* the vessel. I bring to God to-day my past, my habits, myself. God takes them and allows for them in the work He does for my soul. My vocation has established me in a certain set of circumstances which God uses to get rid of the bad in me, to correct my bad habits. He knows how to use it all so that my mould may become what He wants. My work is to lie still in the mould ; my proximation to the divine endurance, my share in enduring the Cross, is this self-surrender, self-denial. 'Take up thy cross, deny thyself.' It is very hard to learn, it is *the* hard thing in life, but there is no real piety if we do not face it and follow Christ in that way right up to the end.

Think of our life, of the wonder of the vessel which God has been making to contain us. We know what it costs us to try and adapt ourselves to the new mould, how difficult it is to lie still and let God do with us as He wills. But through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost we actually possess the power of lying still, the power of divine endurance, and we must use it more, depend more on it, pray more for it, and it will never fail us.

2. The power of piety in us must mean *devotion to the Passion of Jesus*. What does communion with the Passion mean in the matter of endurance ? We should expect that every day we shall come up against something really difficult, temptation and trouble, whether in spiritual things or not. We have no right to assume that there will be any hour in life when we are not

troubled or tempted. We must get out of the habit of thinking that anything that happens is a hindrance to religious growth, except sin. If we could face our difficulties and know that the overcoming of them is the condition of spiritual growth we should understand better devotion to the Passion.

The hurdle race would be easier were the hurdles removed, but then it would cease to be the hurdle race ! Everything except sin has got to be faced and overcome, nothing that happens is to be removed. *Here* is my opportunity of sharing in the Passion, my chance of nestling a little closer to Jesus ; it is *here* that my Beloved wants me to conquer, and here I am going to conquer.

This is real whole-hearted love of the Passion, of the Crucified. When the saints of old prayed to be allowed to suffer, they were not astonished at the little difficulties of which they did not see the meaning, but they interpreted all as being at least allowed by Jesus. Giving themselves to Him and asking Him to mould them, they faced it all.

It is a long road to the perfect Religious Life, and there are many obstacles in it : make up your mind so that so long as the obstacles do not partake of sin for you that you are meant to get over them, not to get round them, or to try and remove them. They are put there for a certain spiritual purpose. Do not count the obstacles, but keep your eyes fixed on the goal, and your heart full of Him Who faced His obstacles for you.

3. *Devotion to healing other people.* God's work of healing claims us if we are to be truly pious ; it is a principle of conduct, a way of action, it concerns the

whole Community life, and our inter-relation each with each other. 'He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many.'

There are two extremes in the life of healing. Sometimes the soul that really loves draws back on herself an enormous devotion of love, and as such becomes a centre of love. And there are other souls who are content to love without being loved. In between these two extremes there is room for all, so long as we hold to the principle of healing with God, of having a healing influence on others.

This touches our thoughts about others, we must approach them from the point of view of one who, if he could, would help and heal. It touches our words, for if we want to heal we must order our words that we may gain their confidence. We must strive to be gentle, patient, easy to be entreated, and never count up the sum of the evil done to us. It covers all our actions, for we must avoid doing anything that will hurt. If each one is there to heal, then peace and charity are assured for ever. It is when we forget this principle that we run into danger, for we are out to heal Africa, and we may be too indifferent to the healing of one another, in healing the Church we may forget the individual need of healing.

This gift of piety, then, is a *power* within us of making and keeping sweet the whole household of God by sharing in the healing purpose of God. It is a living power, the power of Him Who created all things and is restoring all things in Jesus, in His sacred heart. It is a power to take with you. When the dark time comes and prayer is a wilderness, you want this power of piety, to enable you to abandon yourself to the will of God,

to lie still and wait. When trouble, disappointment, sickness, and pain come, you want this power to enable you to share the divine endurance. When Satan interferes and fills your mind with wrong thoughts, jealous, envious, evil thoughts, lay hold of the power of piety and devote yourself to healing the one with whom Satan would make you unhappy.

‘ They shall look on Me whom they have pierced.’

‘ One shall say unto Him, “ What are these wounds between Thine arms ? ” Then shall He answer, “ Those with which I was wounded in the house of My lovers.” ’

‘ Every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him.’

‘ A Lamb standing as though it had been slain.’

III

GHOSTLY STRENGTH OR MIGHT

LET us contemplate—

(a) The promise of God fulfilled in the Babe of Bethlehem : ‘Unto us a Child is born.’ ‘He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.’

(b) The angels’ message: ‘Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.’

(c) The final triumph : ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ ‘Fear not, I am the First and the Last.’ ‘Behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of hell.’

(a) *The Power of Ghostly Strength.* ‘The spirit of might shall rest upon Him.’ Our human, weak wills are maintained in hope by this power of the Holy Ghost. The habit of gripping hold of the will of God in spite of everything is a gift, a virtue deep down in the soul.

1. Hope is a gift which only those experience who have reason to use it. In a shallow life and when things go easily there is no need of hope. But sometimes we are very much at a loss when we begin to go under the surface. Hope can only be known when all is hopeless, when all seems lost. Just as charity, true Christian charity, only comes in when natural charity comes to an end, so with hope. When the natural heart tells us

we have reached the limit, then hope, in a supernatural way, makes us feel ourselves able to grip hold of the divine will and to follow on after God. True life seems to be the experience of the beauty and power of hope. Life on the surface may be much marred by suffering, but beneath the surface be most beautiful in the power of hope.

We behold Him stricken of God and afflicted, the reproach of men, the very outcast of the people, and yet He was *the* strong Man.

2. Hope becomes really known to us when routine tends to kill spiritual growth, there we fall back on hope in the power of the Spirit. Routine is doing the same things every day without associating each detail with Jesus. A life that is fully ordered in detail, if each detail be associated with Jesus in the heart, is a life of ordered, loving service, and is in no danger of mere routine. The recitation of the Office, the place I fill in choir, in refectory, in my cell, the work which is done for months at a time, all this may be either mere details which go to make up a life of routine, or may be associated with Jesus, Who will carry me through days of dullness and of difficulty. No one ever grew tired of an ideal until he ceased to try and reach it. If we are tired of our ideal it means that for some time back we have left off striving after it. We must fall back on the power of hope and learn what hope really is.

3 Hope and Ghostly Strength are special creations of Jesus. They are quite new, though they do not come suddenly, but are developments of what goes before. There is Abraham's courage, there is Moses with a great crowd of rebellious people round about him and yet able to have these forty days holding com-

munion with God. Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, all had marvellous strength, but not Christian hope. That begins when the Child is born, and it becomes our own when the Holy Ghost comes forth from Jesus, and dwells within us His members.

Watch Jesus, the Strong Man, than whom none stronger, with power over sickness and pain and death, the ultimate force in the universe. By Him were all things made, by the word of His power He upholds all things, and He is *my* Power, *my* Strength, He is in me.

We want to forget all else in the universe, and concentrate our mind on this : the Invisible, Unapproachable, Holy God, Who is pure Power, becomes visible in Jesus ; and Jesus through His Manhood manifests His power over every possible resistance ; and I in all my weakness am in Jesus, and He in me. It is a wonderful truth, and in appreciation of that truth lies the root of our joy, our peace, and our freedom, and we become powerful. We are free because powerful, and so in peace, and in peace we are joyful.

When you are established in that what does all else matter ? These things are eternal ; the scars, the wounds, the sorrows, pass away. Yet we must look at them, and looking at them we are astonished at their power and influence, but we do know that God gives a very large liberty to rebel wills, and to Satan. Recognizing that as we do, we still marvel at the power of evil and its great influence. How awful the power of evil is ! How it hurt Jesus ! We must fall back on our knowledge of the power of God, and His power in us. And yet evil hinders me and trips me up. Why is it allowed, why was it allowed to kill Jesus ? We marvel, and we cannot see why God seems to hold

Himself back from us, and to allow times of discipline to go on while He hides Himself from us.

But if we appreciate the power of sin as opposed to the power of Jesus we shall understand something of its influence over the soul, an influence far beyond our reckoning. We have got to trust Jesus, He alone knows how all the discipline and darkness and waiting are absolutely necessary, just as Gethsemane and the Cross were necessary before He could kill sin. We have just to trust Him, and believe that it all means that the light is coming very much closer, that He is unclasping the fingers of Satan one by one. Jesus is not failing us, but the hostile power has to be absolutely purged out.

‘And though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.’

(b) *What is Ghostly Strength in us?*

1. The gift of Ghostly Strength is a personal apprehension of the presence of Jesus in the soul, so that the personal influence of Jesus through the Holy Ghost becomes the motive power of my life. This is not a dream or an ideal, it is a *gift*. ‘Let Thy Fatherly hand ever be over them,’ and the Fatherly hand is Jesus, the dominating influence of my will, so that I walk by the light of Jesus, and it is the comfort that Jesus gives me which holds me up, and the voice of Jesus which cheers me, and against the heart of Jesus I take my rest. *That* is the gift; what I feel about it hardly comes in to count.

When a little child is in pain, it casts itself into its mother’s arms—it is an instinct. The child does not think out first whether the pain will cease or not, were it to die it would die in its mother’s arms. And so with the soul and Jesus: when beside ourselves we cast

ourselves on Jesus we can endure, because His arms are about us and His promises hold us up ; and though the pain goes on we are able to bear it.

‘ In Him was life ; and the life was the light of men.’ ‘ That which hath been made was life in Him.’ Everything in the world lives in the life of God through all eternity, and He counted on you to fulfil your vocation. Is there not strength in that ? He has actually counted on our love and service, on our contribution towards the restoration of all things, on our faithfulness to the end. Can we be sad and cast down ? What can separate us from the love and joy of Christ ? I from the beginning am in the mind of God ; He is in me and I in Him. Our Lord knew what was in man, and He knows what is in me. Is not that a comfort ? It is a trick of Satan to try and make us believe that it is too late for us to attain perfection.

But when Jesus brought me here into the Religious Life, He knew all about me, knew where the difficulty would come—everything that happens to me in the work given me to do comes to me within the sphere of the knowledge of Jesus. He knew, and yet He brought me here to meet and overcome all the difficulties in the strength of His companionship. Is there not joy then, the joy which is not of this world, but which Jesus gives ?

2. Ghostly Strength is in me the promise of Eternal Life. ‘ He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath Eternal Life.’ The whole vocation to religion, as to the ministry, is supernatural, we find ourselves lifted up into the supernatural life. To take a body and mind used to natural ways and to concentrate them on the supernatural is profoundly hard. It is

possible to do it gladly through the supernatural strength of Jesus in me, through the gift of Ghostly Strength, because He Who is in me is Eternal Life, and all I have to do is to clear the channel of the soul that the water of Eternal Life may roll through unhindered. I must get rid of self-consciousness, self-assertion, self-reliance, self-depreciation, hopelessness—all must go. Jesus, the Eternal Power, will do all the rest for me, He will act in me if I will let Him. It is the realization of the supernatural that we need, this recollection or sense of the permanent presence of Jesus with us, the power of talking to Jesus, of letting Jesus act in us. Then the promise comes true, ‘He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath Eternal Life.’

‘He maketh all things new.’ This is the final word of comfort and strength, that we have in us Him Who maketh all things new.

(1) Believe the witness of the saints. S. Theresa is typical of the great saintly women in whom Jesus acted, Jesus dominating her, not by paralysing her natural faculties but by possessing them fully in Him. She used her natural gifts in a supernatural way. ‘The great multitude that no man can number’ found Jesus in them no cause for anything but joy and happiness of soul, for it was true that Jesus was making all things new and making them themselves new.

(2) Believe the witness of our own present life. It will tell us that our past has become new in the power of the Christ Who maketh all things new. There is confidence and assurance, there is strength. ‘Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.’ We look forward to the great day of triumph, for we can know Him Who is to triumph in the Last Day. We want in

and proper to lead them coming away from the temple
to start on their difficult journey to lead us towards
the temple. I remembered the Father in his voice
not only good and generous, but power and joy in the
strength of the Holy Spirit.

I look back to Jerusalem, and the Child Jesus, now
here, for He is the Child of Promise. I look forward
to the great day of triumph, and the King will be of
great courage. I look into my own soul and I find
the Child and the Comforter in me. Hand in hand
with Jesus I can go on undaunted till the day break
and the shadows have away."

IV

KNOWLEDGE

LET us contemplate—

(a) Jesus finding His Apostles, and the Apostles' first knowledge of Jesus, finding their life and joy in the new King. 'Master, where dwellest Thou? Come and see.'

(b) The request of Salome for her two sons.

(c) The gradual teaching of the suffering of the Cross, and the dismay of the Apostles. 'Be it far from Thee, Lord.'

(d) The Apostles now in glory. 'Who are these and whence came they? These are they who have come out of great tribulation.'

The Gift of Knowledge. Knowledge has to do with our intellect, with our mind. 'Let this mind be in you,' the mind of Jesus. Our understanding of the gift of Knowledge comes in this way: it is through the wisdom, power, and love of the Holy Ghost that each creature has its own meaning, its external form and growth and its place in the universe, so that the countless purposes of God shall in His countless creatures be unified in one divine purpose through the wisdom of God the Holy Ghost. This is the one goal to which all things are moving, and the Holy Ghost holds the key to the meaning of the universe. So that in Christ Jesus we find Him Who is at once the Cause and

Crown of creation ; all made for His pleasure, and He in His Manhood the first-fruits of the whole creation. He knows, by His human mind, the divine purpose, and no one knew it till Jesus came, and was born of Mary, for He, being one with the Holy Ghost, has His human mind filled with the Holy Ghost. Till Jesus came, all others were as blind men with regard to it ; even Mary only guessed a little of the mystery of God's purpose. Only the Lamb can open the Book with the seven seals, for He alone is worthy, He alone can know.

But now we all, as members of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Ghost, have the power of knowing the divine purpose, and *that* is the gift of Knowledge. It distinguishes the Christian from the man of the world, the Christian's whole idea of the meaning of life, of its purpose, is different ; and he owes it all to a gift, not to his own cleverness. The Holy Ghost in Baptism, and again in Confirmation, and in every Communion, is illuminating my mind with the lamp which He takes from the light of the mind of Jesus. *Jesus is light.*

(a) What is our knowledge of God's purpose which has been slowly revealed to us ?

1. What is the meaning of suffering ? Here we need the vision that Knowledge gives us. We, who have been protected by God from childhood, have only a very dim notion of the extent of suffering in the world. And just because of that, for us to enter into the sufferings of our Lord is so difficult, it is like beginning a new life altogether, and it shakes us. Creation is so much out of joint that men left to themselves are continually afflicting one another, and God seems to look on. There are people who lead a life of suffering that we

may be comfortable, and we perhaps have been ignorant of it, but it concerns us through Christ.

There is the suffering of the sick whether they know Christ or not ; day after day, night after night, awful suffering goes on. Think of the war in the Balkans and the thousands who are suffering ; the wounded and massacred, the oppressed, the women and children. Think of the ordinary African Christian, oppressed, without liberty, his status for instance on the mainland plantations, his slavery. The majority of the human race are suffering because the beneficent will of God is hindered by the selfishness and self-assertion of man.

God would no longer destroy the human race, but He came and shared the suffering, the sacred heart was pierced with it. He came to share that from which He could not deliver man save by annihilating him. He was born into a class from which forced labour could be exacted (‘ If any man compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain ’). He endured injustice, ingratitude, the hatred of the Scribes ; He endured crucifixion, the death of the criminal. For He would redeem those who cause suffering and those whom suffering broke, covering their weakness by His courage. That was the divine plan for Jesus. There is the curse on the human race : ‘ In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread ’ ; the curse of competition in the stress of which men compete, and the atoning work : ‘ His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground,’ feeding us, living only for us, dying for us.

2. Each generation has its own peculiar suffering. In the first age of absolute corruption God asked martyrdom of the Christians ; they carried their life in their hands, but they were perfectly happy in their

knowledge of the divine purpose, so that ghostly strength within them made them seem hardly to feel their torture. That was the normal state of the Christian of the early ages. (Consider England now, the English Sunday ; can anything be more unlike the state of the Early Christian ?)

All down history when the world was at its worst God made some special appeal to His people ; He called them to be ready for union with Jesus through suffering, to give Jesus scope to offer to the Father through them. There was always the sacrifice of surrender and obedience going up, each in his generation making redemption for the cruel and for the oppressed.

In this Mission we are conscious of the pressure of two wills, that of the eternal will of the Holy Spirit knowing the purpose of God, and the will of evil, partly human, partly Satanic. These two wills are struggling the one against the other. Think of the power of evil as it destroys our work and hinders it. If the evil will is to be conquered there must be wills absolutely surrendered to the vocation to suffering. The divine purpose is not to annihilate the evil will, but to go down into the midst of the evil circumstances and make atonement for those who cause suffering, and for those who break down under it, who curse God and die.

3. He Who asks us to suffer with Him is the victorious Conqueror. This knowledge we have of the divine purpose, this call to suffer and to endure, from whom does it come ? It comes from the King on His Throne. When Jesus on the Cross wanted people to suffer with Him they all forsook Him and fled. They could not hear His call from the Cross, so He calls to us from heaven and we hear.

We do not come to the Cross as on Good Friday only, but we take all that Good Friday and the Resurrection and Ascension mean together. Suffering with Jesus is not merely suffering with the Cross, but taking the wounds of the world they become glorious, each wound becomes glorious then and there. We must altogether get out of our minds that suffering with Jesus is to be sad or melancholy. They for whom we suffer may not know Jesus, but we suffer *with* Jesus.

There is the joy of the Passion, the sense of victory, the consciousness of Christ's power and His victory to help us. As we look to the Throne, to the living Christ in His glory, we shall receive power to go on, we shall know that to suffer is to be glorified. Glory begins when the first scar appears. 'Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold temptations.'

As we ask Christ to extend His authority and power over our life we must remember that it is not meaningless suffering that He asks of us, but that Christ in us is making redemption for all who cause suffering and all who break down under it. It is not setting out to find hard things to do, but it *is* taking the inevitable in the spirit of daughters of God, knowing that whatever comes comes with the sanction of the Father's will.

(b) *Self-Knowledge*. We have absolute power by the Holy Ghost of self-knowledge ; it is a power in the soul.

1. Knowledge of yourself as it is by itself, a separate thing. We must expect a growing sense of sin, for the more the light of Christ's mind is brought to shine on us the more we see of our sin. This must not discourage us, God takes me as I am, and though He break me and break my pride it is His love. As He

shows me some new failure He gives me some new virtue. Association with the mind of Christ and illumination from the mind of Christ must mean growth in self-knowledge.

2. Knowledge of self in relation with other things and other persons. It is the power of knowing how to behave towards other people, the power of discriminating between good and evil, of what is best for me as well as what is merely good. By this power I am able to pick my way among the creatures round about me, using them as God would have me use them.

In prayer you will see that the ultimate response of the faithful Religious to the gift of Knowledge lies in the Vow of Chastity, which in its essence is the placing at the disposal of Jesus the whole nature, body and soul and spirit. That is what He wants, that is why He reveals His purpose to me that there may be increasing dependence on Jesus, ever ready to serve Him and be used by Him. This gift of Knowledge is to place me at the absolute disposal of Jesus, for good or for ill, for joy or for sorrow, for sickness or for health, for time and through eternity.

V

THE GIFT OF COUNSEL

(a) **C**ONSIDER our Lord's promise : ' If ye love Me, ye will keep My Commandments. And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter ' (*S. John* xiv. 16). ' In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you ' (*S. John* xiv. 20).

Consider the promise of union with Jesus in glory. We are here in this world of pain, our feet wounded in the path of this world, but our hearts at rest in the heart of Jesus.

(b) Think of S. Paul's words in prison after suffering of the deepest kind : ' Strengthened with power . . . ' ; ' Strong to apprehend . . . ' (*Eph.* iii. 14-19).

Just as the gift of Knowledge means association of the mind of man with the mind of Christ, so the gift of Counsel is association of the heart of man with the heart of God. As in man there is something that links up our thoughts and our act of will, so in the gifts of the Spirit. When we receive the gift of Knowledge, before we act on that knowledge, we want the gift of Counsel which makes possible for man to make evident before God that which he has before determined on as right. What he has been taught in the mind is transferred to the will, and there the gift of Counsel comes in, heart to heart. Think of the Son of Mary as He is

the revelation of Eternal Love, the Central Heart of humanity Who not only shows you God's love to you but shows to God men's love for God.

There is His own perfect love, and gathered round it all love, and you are to be brought into union with that heart of love by God the Holy Ghost ; it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. The love of God is shed abroad in your heart through the Holy Ghost.

(a) The power of Counsel is the power of choosing the way of perfection and of walking in it.

Vocations are as various as souls ; God knows each child by his name, and the end of each vocation is the heart of Jesus. Each is predestined to fill his own particular place in the heart of Jesus. To many souls in each generation the divine vocation comes here on earth, and they begin to realize the special love laid up for them in the heart of Jesus. Our Lord gave this vocation in the way of the three Counsels—Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. ' He that is able to receive it let him receive it.' For not only does our Lord require of each soul perfect holiness, but to chosen souls, i.e. those created for that purpose, He gives a special vocation, and their perfection depends on their response to it.

On the one hand the life of the Counsels is a matter of choice, and on the other hand it ceases to be a matter of choice and becomes a matter of command.

S. John as man was not under any command to be so close to Jesus, to suffer with Jesus, but as John he *was* under special secret command known only to himself and to his Lord. So with you and with me, to us now it is not a matter of choice, we know that Eternal Love has asked from us a special response of love.

Further, having begun the life of the Counsels, the hardness and difficulty of it become prominent. At first maybe it looked an easy way, we thought it full of joy, those first steps along the path of a new experience saved us from a good deal that used to hinder our spiritual growth. But as we go forward we find the little wounds in our feet which first we made light of are increasing in number, and the further we go the more painful they become. What does it all mean? It means that we were not created only to be loved by God, but also to love God. If sinless, pure, absolute Love in order to justify itself had to come by the way of the Cross, is it wonderful that sinful, selfish human love should have to justify itself by the way of suffering?

What is our love and how can we prove it? In the world we prove our love by the work we do, enduring the changes and chances that come to us in it. In the Convent we prove our love by bearing our wounds and refusing to limp because our feet hurt us, by concentrating our gaze not on our poor wounded feet but on Him Who goes before us on the way. We have chosen, and we have got the power of walking on, and this power does really outweigh all our feelings about the pain of the way. It is a real communication to us of the power and influence of the living Spirit. If we meditate on it, lean on it, and use it, this power does really outweigh all our weakness and our cowardice. 'Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' Meditate often upon that possession of power. We must not be alarmed if when we begin to walk along the way we suffer from loss of gladness and joy. This is only a temporary thing, and is very largely due to the fact that self is dying. The dying struggles of self may

make us impervious to the gladness of God ; it is the rebellion of self, as it does, against being kept under. Some lack of joy is due to God hiding Himself, but the saints were joyful in darkness because in them self had died, and they were glad to be with God in the darkness. We must not be alarmed or depressed by any temporary darkness, because a new sense of freedom lies before us. We open our mouth and draw in our breath, we are free to live in the supernatural. There comes a new peace in the soul in the power of which the soul can suffer and yet be glad. It is a paradox but quite true ; it is the same sense of peace which Jesus had on the Cross. 'My God, My God.' 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit.' We may be peaceful in God while yet sad and suffering, but it does not come till the old man is dead. When peace comes, then we enter into our glory. 'Father, glorify Thy Name.' That is the Way of Perfection, the peace of union with the heart of Jesus, a full share in the life of the Son of God, and you are there in it by virtue of the power of Counsel.

(b) The power of Counsel is the power of glorifying God daily. The supreme work of Jesus on earth was to do nothing but what He saw the Father do. We, in His heart, are led along the path of glorifying God by doing the things which are revealed to us as the will of God for us to do ; by the power of Counsel always choosing what is most to the glory of God ; in the Father's house doing all to glorify God, time, faculties, all put to the highest and best advantage to His glory.

1. There are the choices we are sometimes allowed to make. In the life of prayer there is choice, in the secret communion of the soul with God there is choice,

and wherever it is our business to make choice we must fall back on the power of Counsel and choose that which is the very highest.

2. We can glorify God by thoroughness in our work, our prayer, our recreation.

3. In all difficulties in the Rule or in the life of the soul we must have our eyes fixed on the goal, on that Beatific Vision which we desire to attain if we are to do all to God's glory. 'Who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross.' No soul loves pain as pain, but because it is a necessary step to the Beatific Vision ; no soul will be enamoured of the little joys that God sends as a relief to human weakness, but in pain, as in encouragement, will seek only God's glory.

So the soul lives in the Father's house, not laboriously, heavily, grudgingly, but as a child who is glad to be with his Father ; not questioning the Father's arrangements but falling in with them all, and looking forward to the time when the Father Himself will be all in all, and plans and arrangement will have passed away, and we shall see none but Him.

(c) The gift of Counsel is the power of *accepting* guidance, not of giving it. 'The essence of the spirit of Counsel is the union of our heart with the heart of Jesus. Within the Father's house we accept our Father's orders in all things, desiring more and more that each detail of our life should be brought under the authority of the Father, our dependence on self growing less, our satisfaction in self as a guide dying away. I come to my Father's house, and the more I know Him and His wisdom the more I feel that I can surrender to Him every possible claim of ruling myself. 'Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest.' And

why ? Because the Holy Spirit teaches us that the lines of the guided life are the boundaries of the path which takes me to my own special place in the heart of Jesus. This narrow path is bounded by the lines of a life lived under obedience, and when it seems very narrow indeed and specially hard and difficult I fall back on a marvellous sense of security because I know that I am in my right place. In the very thick of the fight, while I tremble for myself I know that the General is counting on me to be in that very place, and just as He counts on me so He will not fail me, I can feel secure.

When things hurt, I must not look in but look up to His face, and security is granted me. All His power is given me, and I must not be conquered for lack of faith in this power. Our co-operation with the power of Counsel is in the vow of Obedience, and there are certain hindrances to perfect obedience which we need to consider.

1. A certain pride in the will ; a love of pre-eminence, if not desiring to be absolutely first, yet refusing to be quite the last, self-assertion, looking at ourselves with a worldly eye. Naturally we do not like to be told we are wrong, and we try to explain the why and the wherefore of the matters in which we are blamed. This all prevents the divine touch in each detail of our life ; the touch often comes unexpectedly, it takes us unaware, and we fail in obedience for lack of trust in the power of Counsel.

2. Then there is pride of judgement which we bring in from outside, and the spirit of criticism and of gossip, which we have because we are all unmortified British people. As a general rule we admit that it is the duty of those under obedience to obey implicitly, but by pride

of judgement we fail. We used to learn that the Spirit of God in the Convent works through the Chapter and through constitutional authority, and it is pride of judgement to think that unless our plan be adopted God's plan will not be properly carried out. In the power of Counsel we can know and believe that God's hand touches each detail of our life.

On our bad days, when we are unrecollected, when anger is in our hearts, our own personal bias and prejudices get the better of us, and it is hard to bring ourselves back to the power of Counsel. But we can do it if, recognizing the disease at the beginning, we go quickly to our Lord, and tell Him that we want to be of one desire with Him. Then He will help us, and give to us this power of Counsel which He showed to us at the beginning of our Religious Life, at Clothing and at Profession. And in this power we shall go forward until we see Jesus face to face.

‘Spoil not Thy work by sparing me.’

VI

THE GIFTS OF UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM

(a) **L**ET us remember the promise of Jesus of union with God : ' If a man love Me, he will keep My word : and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him ' (*S. John* xiv. 23).

(b) Let us meditate on S. Paul's words : ' I cease not to give thanks for you . . . that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him ' (*Eph.* i. 16, 17).

' And you did He quicken ' (*Eph.* ii. 1).

' When we were dead through our trespasses quickened us together with Christ ' (*Eph.* ii. 5).

' So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners . . . ye are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit ' (*Eph.* ii. 19, 22). The present gift is a foretaste of eternal bliss.

These two gifts affect the soul in its union with God, they make it perfect as a habitation of the Spirit of God. The other five powers we have thought of have to do with the rest of our nature as it is slowly brought into unity in the service of God, as little by little the will gets control over the whole nature. At

the end of the process (in thought), when the will has become master, then, strengthened by the power of Wisdom and Understanding, the soul loses itself in God.

(a) *The gift of Understanding* makes perfect the power of faith, of understanding the whole revelation of God ; it sets the human will free from all deceit and leaves it able to do its proper work unhindered. Understanding is the power of being undeceived, the power of accepting the whole revelation of God, of having an entirely supernatural outlook over the world, with the will unhindered by falsehood or mistake. This power will save us from having a wrong principle at the back of our life, it gives us the divine principle in which to work.

1. How the power of Understanding gives us a new mind in the light of the revelation of God.

There is the whole Catholic Faith : we study it, and then there comes a time when it comes home to us, it becomes the atmosphere in which we live our life, the incarnate ascended Jesus, the glorified Body of Jesus, the Sacraments which bring me into touch with the Body of Jesus, the Church which is the Communion of Saints. Then there are the Scriptures, and as they open up we get a new power of interpreting them, of reading below the letter, so that they become a very Sacrament whereby we pass from that which is outward and visible to the invisible and mystical.

In the power of Understanding we first begin to pray. The first form of mental prayer is *Meditation*, or discursive prayer, when we try with all the powers of our mind, illuminated by Understanding, to get at the inner meaning of some message from God or some article of the Faith. We converse with God about it, it is an intellectual conversation with God, a general

communing with Him, in which God sometimes speaks to us and we make our resolutions. This is bringing the mind into the service of the will, using the mind to prepare the ground upon which the will holds communion with God.

Then we pass to a higher degree of prayer, that of *Acts of the Will*, affective prayer. Here the mind is still used, but very little ; it is the work of the illuminated mind to find a starting place for the will. There is no meditation on Scripture or on an article of the Creed, but for a moment the mind is used and it then retires into the background and is subordinate to the will. In the power of Understanding the will itself works ; and we make our acts, and hold communion with God, each act free and spontaneous, the soul pouring itself out at the bidding of the will, in acts of Hope, Love, Humility, Penitence, etc. Here the mind is silent, the will alone active. This way of prayer is capable of bringing us into very close union with God. The little act of the mind at the beginning is very important ; though there are days when we can do without it, on most days we need it. But the less we use formal meditation the better ; we want God, not what we think *about* God. We must not waste time in thinking what we can do in the future, it is here and now in the presence of God I want to speak to Him, to compel my will to give Him the glory He seeks from me now, to-day, and the power of this prayer will take care of to-morrow. It does not spoil this prayer to use acts of the will that we know, it is often better to be humble and use the formal act than to waste time in prayer, but the soul learns by degrees to do without them.

These acts of the will make us able to go on in darkness, 'My soul is athirst for God, when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?' We must never lose heart about prayer; it is so difficult for us to understand how much of self is still left, and for how long we need darkness and dryness. We cannot have God till we are emptied of self, till we are fit to become the habitation of the Spirit. We have got to trust God, it were false kindness for Him to grant us a presence we could not receive. It may mean years and years of darkness, but if we believe that He created the earth in order to dwell in the hearts of men, and has created me in order to dwell in my heart, then we cannot be faithless.

So long as my will is athirst nothing can prevent His finding me, only let me be strong and of a good courage.

2. The gift of Understanding gives us a new mind in the light of God's purpose. When we have laid hold of the truth of God's purpose the mind gives itself to work out each detail of life according to that purpose, so that the will is always at God's service. Generally we are five minutes too late in coming to understand what we ought to have done. (To our comfort we may remember that in old days we were generally five or six hours too late!) The ideal is that the very moment the detail occurs to the mind it recognizes the purpose of God so that the will is perfectly free to act and do the right thing. Here we have the vow of Obedience perfectly kept, for no hindrance of self-assertion is allowed to stand between the will and Jesus. What a glorious thing! What a thing to practise!

The soul expresses this before God in the *Prayer of Resignation*. This is almost a separate kind of

prayer, it has to do with this 'new mind' and ought to take a real place in our prayer. The manner of it is not different from what we have already spoken of, and we can use it a little each day. In the beginning of it, instead of the mind providing a starting-point, we simply start with a conception of God, God's purpose, God's will.

On days when we are not distracted we can go straight to this prayer of resignation by which we give ourselves entirely to God that He may do with us as He wills. We use the mind to think of the circumstances of our life, but each thing is only thought of for a moment, we pass on at once to the thought of God, to resign ourselves to God. Everything that is concrete in our lives is brought into the service of the will, which is entirely resigned to the will of God. 'Father, save Me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name.'

The mind of our Lord waked up to the thought of the Crucifixion, but only at once to pass on to resigning Himself to His Father's will.

Without this prayer of resignation we shall not attain to perfection, and we may on some days give our whole prayer to it, for it gives us a new understanding of life. The real reason why we meet so many difficulties in our path is that there are a great many things in our life which are not yet fully resigned to God. If we renounced our will habitually there would be no brooding over things that hurt; we are hurt because we still claim certain proprietary rights over ourselves.

Renounce them, abandon yourself, yield yourself to the mind of God, and the peace of God will pass over your life. It really means that the whole of the lower

nature is absolutely given up to God so that nothing remains, our sacrifice of mind, will, understanding, all bound to the horns of the altar. This is covered by the vow of Poverty ; it is the response of the soul to the gift of Understanding ; it is the ' new mind ' which shows we are God's paupers, that we have no rights, and we claim nothing, we receive just what God gives us.

(b) *The power of Wisdom.* This power is in itself unspeakable, it passes the power of men to speak of for it *is* God. It is the power which makes the soul perfect, the will perfect ; it is the secret of God. To the Jew the secret of God was God's ordering of the world, but to us it is the Wisdom of God Who is the Word of God. ' In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

The power of Wisdom brings us face to face with God, mind to mind, heart to heart with Jesus, face to face with Him Who is invisible. In the power of Wisdom, faith, which is vision, reaches its highest degree in this life ; by it holy souls have an intuitive power of seeing truth, and holy men embrace God, whom they can neither see nor discern, in the innermost recesses of their heart. ' If any man love Me, My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.'

God the Invisible, the Ineffable ! And yet the soul knows God by the power of Wisdom.

The love of God, the cleaving of the will to God at all times, and in all circumstances, is the fruit of Divine Wisdom. It is the soul, the higher will of man, ruling over his nature, independent of what his nature offers him in mind and heart, regarding not the joy and peace which his mind reflects from God, but sheerly

by his will clinging to God. Then for me, a sinner, the Divine Wisdom accomplishes its perfect work.

He who lives in the power of the Divine Wisdom, concentrating his whole will on God, has got to be content to have the heart so cold and hard that it cannot reflect the love of God, and the mind so weighed down that it cannot reflect any of the light of God. It is the dark night of the soul which came to so many of the saints, and we may get a foretaste of it quite early in our spiritual life. The meaning of it is that God is trying to give the will its right place and its proper work, and is teaching it to perform it.

This darkness leads us to the *Prayer of Aspiration*, which is the beginning of contemplation. In this kind of prayer it is the will only that works, there is no room for the heart or the mind to work, they are not needed, the soul has got beyond the need of them in it. The will itself reaches out to God, flies up to God, without any image of the mind being used ; faith having taken the soul to God it offers its aspiration, which is child-like in its simplicity, just giving the will, desiring God, wrapping the will round Him either in silence or with words.

That is the beginning of the end, which is contemplation. But here we need a warning. This gift of Divine Wisdom requires a response on our side in the life of prayer, but we must remember that prayer and work are not incompatible. It is hardly possible for the soul to have a vocation to the life of prayer unless it have learned first to do active work entirely in the power of prayer. It must first be proved that the soul can be always recollected, poor in spirit, and truly obedient in work. This way of prayer does not require special

arrangements to make it possible, but it does require the habit of clinging to God by the will. Till we have gained that habit it is a temptation of the devil for us to think we need extra time for our prayer, rather we should take life as it comes, our wills clinging fast to our Father's will.

There is one other warning. We must never give up meditation on the Passion. It has pleased God to reveal Himself to us through His Son. 'He that hath the Son hath life.' And in this Community we are specially bound to the Passion, so that we can never leave it out of our prayer. In our acts of the will we take our starting-points from the Incarnation and the Passion. And even if in the prayer of aspiration we do not consciously make use of it, we still need to read about the Incarnate Life, we need to be saturated with the knowledge of it, the knowledge of the sacred heart of Jesus.

There then is the power of Divine Wisdom by which the soul can be absolutely resigned, the will clinging to God, enabled to cling on when the mind and heart are dark.

And so, 'We will come to Him and make our abode with Him.'

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PASSION

I

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PASSION

CONSIDER the soul in the presence of Him Who is invisible, whom no man can approach unto. Contemplate the movement of Invisible Love in this Epiphanytide—‘Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.’ ‘So God loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son.’ Contemplate the Child crucified—‘Greater love hath no man than this.’ ‘We love Him because He first loved us.’ Contemplate the Child in His glory—‘The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.’ ‘Come unto Me.’ ‘Our life is hid with Christ in God.’

Consider the principles lying behind what we mean by the word Passion. The fundamental principle of the Passion is generous love; generosity from God to us, and in consequence from us to God. ‘Greater love . . .’ ‘God so loved the world . . .’ Consider the Father’s love revealed to us. How do I know about the Father’s love to me? I think of myself as one of a family—how does the Father show His love to humanity? Is it possible to say that love is revealed, and to be secure and confident about it? In the Gospel there is the story of how the Father showed His love for thirty-three years to Jesus of Nazareth, and we can deduce from all we learn of the Father’s love to Jesus, of His love to us, His children. From the Nativity to the

Passion, the life of Jesus was a life of inward joy, peace, and confidence, because of the certainty of the Father's love for Him—not for His sake only, but for ours too. The words 'This is My beloved Son' were spoken for us. The secret of Jesus—in His home-life, His ministry, the power of His miracles, His patience and endurance under rejection, the shame and pain of Calvary—was that He actually knew, with a knowledge that could not be darkened, that the Father loved Him, took pleasure in Him, showing Him His will ; that is the Father's love to you and to me.

Meditate on the generosity of that love, the fullness, how great, how immeasurable is the love of Jesus ! And then go on and look up into the face of Jesus, and greet Him as the Word of God made Flesh—Love made Flesh. Meditate on the love of Jesus for you as an individual, and measure the love of God in the love of Jesus for your soul. But it is One Divine Love, One and the same God, 'I and the Father are One.' Go back in your mind, and consider how great the love of Jesus is for you. Out of what did He not call you ? Up to what height has He not called you ?—it is sheer love on His side. Consider in the experience of temptation how time after time the love of Jesus refuses to let us go, and draws us back. Consider the love of Jesus in the life of prayer and Communion, how He pushes His way through the darkness, often of our own making, and gives us courage. Meditate on Communion itself, how morning after morning Love Incarnate pours Himself into our hearts. The generosity of the love of Jesus ! What have I done to deserve His love ? Have I ever given what I promised Him ? Yet He loves me, and my whole life is just a story of the

struggle of Jesus to get Himself loved by me. He never wearies or gets impatient, always His love follows me, pleads with me, has forgiven and forgotten, and is ready to begin again as though there was no past as far as He is concerned. That is the generous Love which lies behind the Passion, Love that created us and yet died for us, and that Love is a human love, Love made Man, which has called us and yet condescends to wait for us.

Let us begin to ask ourselves of our love to God, what have we in the way of generosity to God ?

In the eyes of the Father, through the grace of the Sacraments, we stand *within* the love of Jesus. We are not isolated people, each one of us is within the love which is the heart of Jesus loving the Father ; we start there. And the Community is not a guild of individuals moved by devotion to service, to the mystic life ; it is a living entity within the heart of Jesus. That is the platform on which you stand, all knit together by the love of Jesus, each one with His love in you, increasing in the perfection of that love which you are to give to the Father. [Only, in virtue of your vocation as a Religious of the Passion, you are not only within the love of Jesus, but within that expression of His love which is Calvary. The love of Jesus has no measure, though each mode of expression can be thought of as a separate way. In Baptism and Confirmation you are established in the love of Jesus, then He separates you, as it were, and says, ‘ My love, which is your life and your bond, shall be expressed in you individually, and by you all together, and the way of expressing it is Gethsemane and Calvary.’

[To every man his own vocation, his own particular degree of love, and mode of expression of love ; and

you in this Community have been granted to understand what He has asked and have had the courage to respond to His grace. Trust to Eternal Love, for you are dedicated and consecrated to this—that you love the Father with the love with which Jesus on Calvary loves Him. Look up, and it seems fairly clear in retreat, but look outwards and downwards and the world seems to close round you and says you cannot do it, and Satan frightens you and the routine and labour of work with its interruptions mock you, and say ‘Where is Love to-day?’ In retreat get this clear, that the love you are to offer to the Father, is the same Love with which Jesus adored and loved the Father in Gethsemane and on the Cross; and Jesus loved the Father in creatures, through creatures, by creatures. He was not frightened lest the world should close round Him, for the closer it came the more He fell back on the fact that it was the love for the Father that was the basis of all, it was that love that kept Him. So the outward setting was redeemed and brought into the love of God. The moment of crucifixion was the moment He loved Him most, in the cruelty, the rejection of God, the thirst for His Blood—then the love of Jesus satisfied the Father for you and for me. And so we shall find that our vocation is just as clear when we look down and out, as when we look up, and we shall give generous love in and through those who are round about us.

Let us think of the *areas* in which this generous love is to be shown by us.

1. *The sphere of our own inner heart and soul.* No man may pry there, he can only know what I let him know; in that secret place of my heart, Jesus asks for a generous love—a love that knows no measure, no

time or season, but is constant, not partial or half-hearted, not attracted from this to that, but a heart fixed on the Bridegroom and the Father in the Bridegroom.

What exactly is the condition of this inner soul that is hidden away? For here I have no excuse to make with regard to others' interference: it is my own property. What is my heart furnished with? Is it full of my own plans, of considerations of my own value, of thoughts about myself? Or is it honestly the consecrated, spotless, dustless temple of Eternal Love, wherein I try whole-heartedly to love Him? 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'

2. *The Community.* In the heart of Jesus where you take your place, and where you apprehend the vocation to which you are called, the love which is redolent of Gethsemane and Calvary is not only a chain chaining you to the feet of God, but it passes round your Sisters too, till it reaches God. Therefore, if you would love God as He asks you to love Him, you must give Him a generous love which includes the Community—a generous, constant, forgiving love, a love that can endure even in storm and stress, whole-hearted, sincere.

3. *The Church Universal,* Love co-terminous with the whole heart of Jesus. This love is figured to you in those God brings closest to you for your ministry, brought to you not by your own choice, but in the providence of God. The love with which you love the Father is bound up in the love wherewith you love His people; it is the mystery of the nearness of humanity to God. This sphere, peopled by others, speaks to us of many responsibilities and burdens, and needs to be permeated by the love wherewith Jesus joins us to Himself, and

then makes us become lovable to the Father. It is a curious thing, with that beautiful word love there is found the cruel word of the Cross—love and the Cross. The riddle of the universe is good over against evil, but when we understand that love goes hand in hand with the Cross, then it becomes clear, for God does not change. God's mercy is beyond count, it does not change to suit us ; true, He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, but He does not change. So if we would know the love of Jesus, know it and share it, then the love wherewith we love Him and the Father must be the love expressed by Jesus in Gethsemane, before Pilate, in the scourging. 'God so loved . . .'—in that degree He loved the world, and if the task of love cannot be accomplished without attaining that degree let us trust the Father, and set our faces to get a living knowledge of the love wherewith the Father loves us, and wherewith one day we shall love Him.

II

ETERNAL LOVE THAT IS SYMPATHY

LET us contemplate the Eternal God revealed to us in Jesus, the divine sympathy expressed to us in the human Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us. Contemplate the Child of Bethlehem, the helpless Child in His Mother's arms, and adore Him, the Eternal God. Contemplate Him on the Cross in all His pain, shame, and ignominy, and adore Him, the One Eternal God. Then let us adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament, continuing His life among men, their Food and Refreshment under the form of Bread and Wine, our Eternal God. 'The Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.' 'Who, though He were rich, yet for our sakes became poor.'

This morning let us meditate on sympathy, on the principle of love that is sympathy underlying the Passion, the love that suffers alongside of the Beloved.

1. Let us consider *God and His sympathetic love*. In the Incarnation Eternal God in His Eternal Being and Eternal Fullness deliberately chose to exist, speaking in human metaphor, in time and space, to live through and to explain Manhood, to take the form of a Jewish Child from a Jewish Mother, breaking into the development of the human race at a particular time, at a time and place which He chose, and this because of His love to us men. We see as we meditate that since God is

unchangeable, the love that brings Him from heaven is not a new love which He suddenly developed two thousand years ago, but it is Eternal Love expressing Himself in sympathy. The Sacrament of His sympathy is the Incarnation, the whole human experience of Jesus from His Birth onwards is the Sacrament of His sympathy from all ages—it proves it. ‘God so loved the world,’ God so loved you and me that He deliberately chose to make our circumstances His own. There is nothing of condescension or superiority on His side, there is nothing of patronage, but it is just love bursting forth, the intensity of divine desire for you and for me. He *wants* us, He does not need us in the sense He could not do without us, but He wants us in the fullness of His love. He leaps the gulf from Creator to creature, and coming swiftly from the Throne of God in the darkness of Christmas night, He is with us, *God with us*. That is the point from which all comes, there is to be a oneness between Love which comes forth and love which returns.

2. *God has accepted the responsibility for His children*, and has come to share their condition and their lot. It takes a great deal of praying to get this firmly rooted in the heart and mind, because it is so unlike human reasoning. One has to define what God is and what love is, and if you take Jesus of Calvary as God Who is Love, then whatever you have to say about the cruelty of the world, its darkness, etc., you see that God tastes of it all by His own choice, making Himself responsible for His children. When we do not trust God completely we ask, ‘Why hast Thou made me thus?’ It is because we have not realized the truth about God. Look in front and see Jesus of Calvary, and, saying

‘Whither,’ follow Him. Do not look at One above in glory and ask, ‘Why,’ but look in front, and see the broken Form on Calvary, and follow Him in confidence, believing that in our life too there will be the resurrection and the pouring out of the Spirit. We know Him in whom we have believed, and that He is truly sympathetic, carrying our griefs, bearing our sorrows. Think what it means to any country that there should be some in the Church who in spite of darkness do not challenge a God made out of their own minds, and that there should be a small body who look in front and see Jesus with the marks of the Passion, and who have the courage to follow Him and to endure to the end.

3. *God takes the responsibility for you and for me.* The world was then as it is now, in darkness, and earnest people were looking for new light, and the foundations of civilization were being shaken, and down into it all God came and accepted the whole past of the Jewish race and Church. God came and took Flesh of a Jewish Virgin, He was poor and despised, He was amongst the lowest in social life, and thus God began to acquire a human experience of what life in the low ranks of the despised Jewish race meant. There were no special arrangements made ; He faced life with all its weight of labour, poverty, sorrow, and misunderstanding of relatives. See how He lives out His thirty years, and how He then appears to fulfil His ministry, after the manner of a Jewish prophet, accepting the ordinary experience of a prophet in a loose and worldly generation. The only relief from the oppression of this life was in His own overpowering love for the sick and sorrowful. His doctrine was too high, too stiff

and strict, and yet too revolutionary for many, and so He went through the experience that prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah had gone through. Then came the end, when He set Himself to meet all the spiritual forces of evil in the universe. The days of the Passion are the days of this conflict, and Jesus was not in any sense relieved from the power of the army of Satan. He was tempted in every conceivable way, cut off from all He loved, denied by one He trusted, deprived of all He possessed—He lost His good repute, His good Name, and He died the death of a criminal. Nothing was left Him, and He accepted it all, taking the normal experiences of a prophet, and adding to them the result of challenging the whole course of sin and evil. So He suffered and so He died, with the result that within fifty days Man reigned on the Throne of God, Satan was cast down, and God the Holy Ghost was poured out on all who would receive Him, and the human race stood out as a Catholic Church. God had taken the fullest responsibility for you and for me. And in the process of victory, those gone before were not forgotten, for the All-Victorious Christ passed, and all whose faces were set Godward followed—the victory was complete. So we have complete responsibility, divine sympathy, God with us, Christ in me. ‘Lo, I am with you alway.’ His is a love that does not mock us. ‘Beneath us are the Everlasting Arms.’

4. *There is established amongst us now Jesus Who is become our Brother and our Sacrifice.* Jesus dwells among us, our Brother, Bone of our bone and Flesh of our flesh. He has come that in Him we may be presented to the Father, redeemed from evil, delivered from tribulation, sanctified from sin, and He is amongst

us as the Lord of His Church. The Church on earth has this twofold work : it is to be the revelation to men of divine sympathy, and the offering to God of human sympathy, of men's love which has become sympathy in the Christ and for Christ. The divine sympathy should be written all over the work managed by the ideal Church, and each one brought in and fulfilling his vocation offers love which is sympathy, sacrifice which is sympathy, richly, fully, completely. That is its essence—a sacrificial Brotherhood—and the measure of the Church's failure may be taken by the difference between this ideal and the Church as it is to-day. We are responsible for our own souls, and you are responsible for your own Community, and a Community is a Church in little, a kind of representation of the great big universal Church. There is the essence of the Community—sacrificial Sisterhood—the Brotherhood in Jesus—with all that means of love and sympathy, sacrificial sympathy of one member to the other, and in the devotion that is given to Jesus. There is to be a love for Jesus, and sympathy with Him, and His desires, hopes, and aims ; a love that does not count the cost, a sympathy not only in word and feeling, but in deed and truth. It is God in His Incarnation paying the price of being responsible for the creation of the Catholic Church. We look about for the Sacrificial Brotherhood and we know that God is looking for it. The Jews failed to give it Him, ' When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth ? ' ' Fear not, little flock,' for it is not all our own effort; we must have the intention, the desire, the readiness, but then there is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom.

5. As a practical point :—

(1) If the Spirit of the Passion is the spirit of sympathetic love and service, it follows that we have to be prepared for the unexpected. ‘Watch ye therefore,’ the Lord may come as a thief in the night. There is a danger that vocation may establish a sort of routine in the heart. In certain lines our vocation does call us to move in a sort of groove, and the danger is that we should come to resent anything that is unexpectedly and suddenly thrown in our path ; we are not quite sure that it was in the contract to face a thing like that. This means we are in danger of putting a means in place of the end. The end of the Religious Life is complete union with God, a permanent end, the goal is union of the soul with love which is sympathy, and you must not ask that love which is sympathy to provide a perfectly smooth road to God. Expect nothing at all, except the figure of the Son of Mary in front, leading us to this or that according to His own divine love, and be convinced that wherever He leads He will reveal the unknown to you, for He wants to draw out sympathy, and to strengthen your sympathetic service. Be afraid of routine and expect all that comes, however it comes, provided you can see Jesus standing with you and it.

(2) We have to be prepared for the difficulties of sympathetic service to a people strange to us, and yet not unlike us beneath the surface. They are strange and startling in ways and thoughts, but if we are to give God a true sympathetic love, we must avoid any feeling of patronage and superiority and condescension with Africans, and not speak to or treat them otherwise than we would Europeans of our own social standing.

There is great danger of getting into the habit of presuming on our superiority over them, and the harm that is done is done to our Lord. If we want to get over the gulf of separation we must first get over it in our own hearts, it has to be interior first, the sense of union in our hearts, the sense of sacrificial brotherhood, it must begin there. If the heart is sound, God will have no difficulty in using us. We are up against racial hostility which is real, against the atmosphere of Europeans in Africa, and it all needs time and prayer. Consider it on the highest ground, as part of the sacrifice of sympathetic love. And if we can accomplish this sympathy, it leads to the moral union of our wills with God, which is the basis of all true prayer. That is the reward which lies before us, becoming truly sympathetic we shall become perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. Sympathetic love strengthens our prayer, and love and prayer strengthen this mystical likeness to Jesus of Calvary

III

DIVINE PEACE CALLING OUT JOYFUL OBEDIENCE FROM MAN

LET us contemplate Adam and Eve in their emptiness of soul, created very good, able completely to love God but lacking the indwelling Presence. Consider God's hope for them and how they failed God. Contemplate the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, whose Manhood existed in the Eternal Word of the Father, not only perfect, but the Fountain of Perfection. Contemplate the saints of God, in the manhood of Adam and Eve, with the Lord from heaven dwelling in their hearts, dominating, ruling, filling them, acting through them, and so carrying them to perfection. 'He that followeth after Me shall not walk in darkness, saith the Lord.' 'I am come that ye may have Life, and that you may have it more abundantly.' 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed.'

Let us meditate on the groundwork of the Passion which is divine peace, calling out joyful obedience from man.

1. Let us adore Him Who is Himself Eternal Peace, *the* Peace which passeth understanding, Eternal Love

Who lacks nothing, self-satisfying, dwelling in richness and love. Adore Him Who is quite certain about Himself and His purpose, quite sure of Himself, unconquerable, and so in the fullness of His love able to give His Son to be incarnate and to die, certain that the fruit of His Gift will be worthy, that it will be worth while and accomplish what He intends. 'Why do the people so furiously rage together . . .' 'The King sitteth above the water-floods.' 'God's in His heaven, all's right with the world.' God is certain of Himself, He did not create haphazard, Love maintains the controlling hand, and in the end all things work together for good for God and those who love Him. 'O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace, grant union with Thee in that sure confidence of Thy love, holiness, and power. Let Thy peace possess me, in Thy will is my peace.'

2. Jesus Christ is our Peace because of His joyful obedience to the Father, the conformity of His will to the Father's will. He has no doubtfulness as to the Father's victory, no hesitation in ascribing it to the Father's perfect wisdom, which man must follow. External circumstances are indifferent, He is glorified in the hour of rejection, because His will is one with the Father's will, He sees through the darkness the glory of the Father's wisdom, behind the mob of armed men He sees the invisible light of God's glory. The Eternal Peace possesses Him to the very extreme limits of His human heart as your soul possesses your body, dominating, inspiring, upholding it. 'I have meat to eat that ye know not of; My meat is to do the will of My Father.' 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word . . .' Thus it was the joy of Jesus to

follow the Father's will wherever it led Him, and He gave always the same impression of underlying calmness, recollection, and inward strength. It is because of the divine peace of God which controls and fills His human heart, and is in the background of His thinking and planning, so that He can endure Gethsemane. It was not a drama, but a reality ; a battle fought by the Word Incarnate for your sake and mine, which no one could fight who had ever given way to sin. It required holiness, perfect holiness. So the Word Incarnate, brought very low in body and mind by agony and mental struggle, could endure to the end, and having paid the penalty of the battle in the sweat of blood, could stand up and say, ' Let us be going,' and so He goes to meet His foes. The battle of Gethsemane, as also that on Calvary when nailed to the Cross, was only possible to one possessed by Eternal Peace. There is an analogy in the deaths of the martyrs ; the martyrs also were conscious of nothing so much as this, that Jesus filled them with His peace. There is the peace of God in the Manhood of Jesus and in the martyrs. But in the mystical darkness on the Cross there is no analogy. At one moment something happened, and Jesus was thrown back on the mere power of His human will, but of a will possessed by the peace of God. And the peace of God with His joyful, obedient will triumphed, and in the power of the Spirit Jesus offered Himself an Eternal Sacrifice ; able to endure to the bitter end because possessed by Eternal Peace.

3. Jesus has left on earth His mystical Body, and the Church is to find peace in the joyful acceptance of the Father's will. The peace of the Church lies in joyful obedience to the Father's will. It is true that

the richest and most fruitful times in the Church have been times when the world has hated her, her fruitfulness has never lain in times of prosperity, because the real sense of being possessed by God is found completely only when the Church is driven back on her obedience at all costs, and then the peace of God has filled her, and she has been able to recover and increase. 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.' Ask yourselves what is the true secret of the life of the Church and of the Community ; how shall it come to know itself as possessed by Eternal Peace and as used by God ? Only in one way, the way of joyful obedience to the Father's will, of conformity to that will, conformity with the Father's purpose, the Creator's plan, can lie the path to the perfect peace of God.

4. How is this true of individuals ? In the sense of the New Testament, a true Christian is ideally a man whom the peace of God possesses. That does not say he is a man who is always conscious of being possessed by the peace of God. Of ourselves we can accomplish nothing ; we are of the earth, earthy ; we belong to the natural order and the natural order ruined by sin, with Satan triumphing over it. The Second Man is from above, from heaven, and He, Jesus, shows in His Life and Passion what it is possible for a sinless human nature to accomplish in the power of the peace of God. He shows us perfect Human Man with the closest conceivable union with God, and how He lives, suffers, endures, dies, and rises again. And then He makes this offer—He offers to lift us out of the natural order and lift us up on to the level of manhood which is sinless, and we find that He, whom we thought to be just Perfect Man, is the Fountain for washing away

sin, is Holiness which can become indwelling strength in us, is Endurance which can endure in us, and that He can do with and in us what He did without us and for our sakes. It is beyond us, but of His adequacy we cannot doubt, and of the power of the peace of God established in the heart. The saints give us hope that in the last end Jesus will triumph in and through us, and my own knowledge of Jesus is enough ; ‘ I *know* that my Redeemer liveth ’ ; ‘ I know in whom I have believed, and that He will keep that which I have committed to Him unto that day.’ So the peace of Christ should begin to possess me now, every day I should yield myself to the peace of God that He may possess me.

The daily gateway is the gateway of repentance ; the acknowledgement before Jesus of His unspeakable power and of our unspeakable weakness, of our continual failures, but of our sorrow, and desire to respond to Him. Then there is the pathway beyond, but we often have to return with Jesus to the gateway, though not alone for He takes us back, and in proportion as we are paupers in spirit, the peace of God will fill us. As we pass from the gateway, there is the little path into the Presence, the path of prayer. And just as we cannot get anywhere near the peace unless we forsake self and all playing with sin, so we do not get into the Presence without this path of prayer, and we come day by day with this intention, that the peace of God shall not be hindered in His desire to possess us for another day. Peace of God, possess me ! However weary and distracted we may be when we come, let us set ourselves to this, the desire to be possessed by the peace of God.

Then there is the Presence itself, and of that who

can speak ? Our knowledge is so small, so irregular ; we have read about it and we have, perhaps, our own little experience of it. But through penitence and prayer, the peace of God does dwell in our hearts, and then there is a sense of calmness, power, and patience for a time, which astonishes us because it is Christ that dwelleth in us, the power of endurance, so that temptation which so often entraps us becomes faint, so that pain and sorrow and grief, which at other times have made us look back, rebel, and repine, suddenly become possible to endure. And in obedience to the Father's desires I suffer bravely and I begin to obey. The great ones find joy in this because it is not they but Christ in them, and the crown in the world's view is influence because others begin to take notice that they have been with Jesus and are centres of spiritual power for the healing of the nations, and some for the healing of men's bodies. And the end is, that earth becomes a foretaste of heaven, God has made His tabernacle with us, and we only need what He likes to give us, paupers, having nothing, and possessed by the peace of God. ' Christ in us, the Hope of Glory.'

IV

THE PASSION AS IT REVEALS THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE OF GOD AND GOD'S HATRED OF SIN

THINK of Adam and Eve, human nature cast off from the indwelling presence of God, created for union with God, capable of union with Him, designed by God to be possessed and ruled by Himself, and yet separated from Him by sin. Contemplate the soul in Baptism in which God has done away with the work of sin, once more dwelling in him, possessing and ruling the human soul and body ; the newly baptized having eternal life, and capable in that moment of reaching the heavenly level, yet having within himself the tendency to please himself, the tendency to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, yet able if he will to please God. Over against those two types consider the Man Christ Jesus, His Manhood possessed by God, remade, reformed in the Word of God, and yet in every point excluded from the tendency to sin, like unto us subject to every attack of sin from outside; let us adore our Holy Father for sending to us the Saviour, for His pity and for His love.

1. Let us consider the Passion as it reveals this underlying principle of God's hatred of sin. In the beginning, let us fall back on the truth that God is holiness,

holiness is His being and His nature. Holiness is not an adjective applied to God, holiness *is* God, the force and power behind all things—God is Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. You cannot conceive of anything imperfect in God, or anything lacking, He is Goodness including Love and Holiness, Truth including Holiness, Beauty including Holiness, and He is my God. If He be all that, sin is from the very start foreign to God's creation, it has no place in it, it is not within the thought of it. God, unfolded in the creature world, is the unfolding of Beauty, of Truth and Wisdom, the unfolding of Goodness, Love, and Holiness ; sin is quite contrary to God and to God's creation. The will of God is holiness realizing Himself, and His thought and purpose towards us is our glimpse of Eternal Holiness realizing Himself, and declaring Himself to those who have ears to hear. The commandments of God express holiness in terms of human life ; if you would be like Me, do this or do not do that. The creation expresses the interior beauty, goodness, and holiness of God, and nowhere is sin to be found ; yet over against this you have to place a world that is in sin, and so you need to pray for yourself, to be penitent for yourself and for those who are your fellow-sinners. There is therefore the message of wrath and of pity, 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,' but there is a divine wrath for the casting out of evil, and the divine pity, for God pities His children. The exceeding hatefulness of sin, which is contrary to God's purpose and demand, is met on God's side by what we call hatred and pity : 'As a father pitieth his children.'

2. In the culmination of revelation God appeared

among men as *Judge* and *Saviour*, fulfilling wrath and pity. What He specially reveals is the personal nature of the attack which sin makes, the personal element in the struggle. When sin came upon the scene its most personal sting lay in the fact that it hurts God, it is aimed at God, it is holding God at its mercy, to hurt Him in every victim which it ruins.

With regard to our Lord, we see Him coming as Saviour and Judge, to redeem sinners and to destroy sin, and first He is shown to us in the humble life at Nazareth, living for thirty years a normal human life, the home life of a carpenter. Look at the life of Jesus from the point of view of the home : we see the Blessed Mother and S. Joseph, and the elder brethren till they marry. Mary ponders all things in her heart, she has not full understanding of it all, but she trusts her Son and knows about His origin and must have known completely about His Messiahship. Of the rest of the family, no one knows anything except John the Baptist, and he was in the wilderness. His brothers misunderstand Him and His purpose. All the privacy of Jesus is when He chooses to go out by Himself into the fields and mountains. That is the home setting. Then there is the whole village life : the shop, synagogue, market-place. That life went on for thirty years, and while it sounds an easy life to go through, yet it is lived under the shadow of Calvary, and it was lived under the shadow of sin, for Gethsemane and Calvary in their dramatic form passed within a few hours, but in their essential struggle they took thirty-three years. He knew all those years that the day was coming when men would reject and crucify Him, and the pain was merely a symbol of the interior rejection by the hearts

of men of Him Who made and loved them, and had come to redeem them from the shadow of sin.

We know what it is to love certain sinners in our poor way ; imagine what it is like for thirty years to live a retired life, to see sin at every moment all round you, and each one of the sins directed against yourself ! Imagine all the temptations and thoughts arising from those sins, and while they cannot lay hold on anything in you, they can fill your mind, and each sin you see and each temptation you feel represents a force that is beating and breaking the souls of the people you love. You see not merely an attack on you in each sin, but the attack of Satan on the souls of those whom you love and for whom you are going to die. You see the rejection of the Father and of you, and you live in the midst of that rejection. That is a finger-post in the direction of the attitude of Jesus towards sin at Nazareth, so hateful to Him is sin. You can see later on in His ministry signs of His real disappointment ; He is amazed at people's unbelief, they will not see His purpose, they deliberately sin in His very presence, and this is His ordinary experience as Man—He cannot escape from it. We have our own temptations, and we feel their shame ; we can understand a little dimly, but He feels every temptation and every sin as personal to Himself, it touches Him.

Then at the beginning of the Passion, watch Him, when He is grieved, sad, sorrowful even unto death, so oppressed in spirit that He could cry, ' Father, save Me from this hour,' and it was only sin that oppressed Him. The external suffering was symbolic, not that He did not feel it, but it was as nothing compared to the inner meaning of it. With regard to the sorrow

of Jesus, He did not know when the final victory would be, when the great day would be, nor how long He was to go on suffering rejection by generations of men. Gethsemane tells us of the exceeding hatefulness of sin, for the story of Gethsemane amazes us more and more, when we try to explain things in the light of it. The purpose of Jesus in going to Gethsemane is that He shall in His Manhood accept once and for all the Father's plan of salvation. Here we see Jesus, the Son of Mary, in His human soul and body, facing the conflict, facing this task of accepting finally the divine plan of salvation. He, Jesus, in the weakness of His human nature and in the strength of His human will, accepts the rejection of the whole human race in the person of the Jewish nation and the Roman governor. Eternal Love will stoop, because by stooping Eternal Love will conquer. Contrary to human thought and human nature, He faces it all, He will not lift one finger or say one word in complaint, in His Body He will bear all that has to be borne, He has accepted it from the start. He bears the trial, the blasphemies of the High Priest, He hears the sentence of death, He bears the shame and indignity of being stripped and scourged, the pain of the stripping again, and the crucifixion, the passing through the gate of death which sin had dominated though not created, the fierce grips of the powers of evil till He overthrows those powers. He faces desertion, rejection by every one, even, as it seemed, by the Father Who was the very Light of His life. Thousands of souls who are His own will sin and sin beyond thinking, rejecting the highest that they know, and the best that they have seen, and will side against Him. In Gethsemane we know that those who saw Him at the

end of His prayer testified that it was only in an agony of sweat and blood that He was able to endure it, and that an angel ministered to Him. And in the shadow of the Cross He had lived His life, foretasting it.

Then let us think a little of the last moments of Jesus, the great hour when death was very near, and when that most awful cry came startling all the watchers, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' We do not, and we cannot, know exactly what it means, but we can understand that it is the divine will that the Eternal Word should pass through in His soul and body what is natural to man, and that though He be the God-Man, Jesus, yet He uses nothing as it were out of the secret store of divinity. For the divine will is that Jesus should endure in His human soul all that belongs to the human race because of sin, and so it is just possible for us to imagine how the mind of Jesus, the heart of Jesus, as it were on the brink of the separation of soul and body, seemed to pass into darkness as though they could no longer fulfil their normal duty. Jesus with His will holds on, and in the very moment that the darkness is over, He cries, 'It is finished,' 'Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit.' A darkness came over the soul of Jesus as a shadow might come between us and the sun, and it is His glory that His will clung to the Father's love through it all. We find here the fullest conviction of the personal nature of the attack of sin upon Him and of the horror of sin.

3. How can we enter into the fellowship of the Passion, Jesus being what He is, and we what we are? We are by nature capable of union with Him, naturally and supernaturally we are bone of His Bone, flesh of His Flesh, since Baptism. We are hindered because of

interior tendencies of self-pleasing, and also by the fact that at one time we have deliberately chosen self and Satan, and have clung to things in place of God : that is the difficulty. Because of this we can only experience in part the assaults of sin and the burden and pain of sin, because it does not hurt us as it hurts Jesus, and because Jesus always assuages our pain for us—He always interferes to hinder the full force of sin and pain, He cares for us. We cannot feel the sense of personal rejection which Jesus feels because we have no rights over the souls of men ; we can be broken-hearted because somewhere love has failed, but that is different ; we cannot feel sin as a personal attack as He feels it. The only One Who can feel that is He Who has the right to say, ‘ Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest.’

What we can do is to follow along a rough path trodden down by Jesus as He goes on ahead, and following along behind Him we can accept all the results of sin that He allows to come upon us, our own and other people’s. He has broken through this wilderness, and there is a path along which we can follow after Him, and every time He says, ‘ This is the result of sin, endure, face it and bear it, take up thy cross and follow Me,’ we can obey Him and follow. And this is no poor or mean thing, it has limitless possibilities, for it means looking on the path with the eyes of our Judge and Saviour Who hates sin and loves souls.

Let us lay stress on obedience, let us follow after Jesus in the path He has trodden, the path of the Three Vows, of Community Life, for in following that path we assuredly follow Him. It is in the simplest and most child-like obedience to the Holy Rule and its spirit

that you may become conformed to Jesus and His hatred of sin and love for sinners. The danger is lest we reserve to ourselves the right to assert ourselves a little as we follow Him. He alone knows the measure of our self-assertion and the genuineness of our efforts to conquer self, and it is He and He alone Who can give us the victory. This is the truth : that until we forsake self completely in our following of Jesus in the narrow path, we shall always lack some of the joyful peace and serenity that He shows. He would be with us as our Peace as He bids us pick up another cross and follow on to know the Lord. ' If any man follow Me, he shall not walk in darkness . . . saith the Lord.'

The vision is true and sure, let us tread down self and leave the rest to Jesus.

V

SELF-SURRENDER AS A PRINCIPLE OF THE PASSION

LET us contemplate our Lord in His Transfiguration, as He thinks of the death He is to die, and entirely emptied of Himself is filled with Divine Glory. Consider Him completely wrapped up in the mind of the Father, so that the Divine Glory shines through, Moses and Elias being visible to Him and speaking with Him : it is a glimpse of heaven here on earth.

Let us consider the ideal communicant in the presence of God, emptied of self, wrapped up in the Father's will, devoted to the Father's purpose, having nothing of her own, desiring nothing of her own, looking only for the footsteps of Jesus, and refusing to tread where He has not trod. And then when Jesus comes to her, as Christ in her, she 'having nothing, yet possessing all things,' is filled with God ; and consider how little by little the indwelling presence of Christ makes itself known and felt through her as she becomes changed little by little out of her own likeness into the likeness of Christ, according to her measure. And consider how in the Resurrection this likeness will be finished and Jesus will complete His work in her, changed from grace to grace, and from glory to glory, until she become like Him because she sees Him as He is.

Let us try to consider the principle of self-surrender, the law being that he who would be filled must first empty himself, and as a principle of the Passion, it emerges out of the divine life.

1. Think of *God-Love* as distinct from human love, the Eternal Love of God the Father. The very essence of the Godhead is Love Who gives Himself, and in giving Himself gives Himself as another, for He receives back from Himself what He gives : He gives Himself and receives the Son. The giving is so full and so complete, and the receiving is as the receiving of love from another ; the Father, the Source and Fount of Love, the Son, the Response of Love. The Godhead is given in Jesus, Godhead Eternal ; Eternal Love gives Himself to men in Him Who is the Son. The Love comes back as the mystical body of the Son, having borne its proper fruit, as the heart of Jesus united with the innumerable company of the elect. The giving of the Father is the means of the filling up of the response to the Father's love. Self-surrender, self-sacrifice, a real giving and pouring out, and in Jesus, a pouring out that is painful, symbolized by the Passion, and the fruit thereof the filling up, which is the crown of the work of self-sacrifice. In the Godhead there is the principle of giving and receiving, of sowing and reaping, and what is sown is what is reaped, Love creates Love, and brings Love in response. It is so different from ourselves, our love of self is so fruitless and dead !

2. Think of *Jesus-Love*. Here is another type of love, Perfect Man's love which stands by itself. Here there is a twofold truth : (1) In watching Jesus we see His first work is to love His Father, ' Wist ye not that

I must be about My Father's business ?' *There* is the law of life of Jesus, and in dwelling amongst us in the Incarnation He uses the world with the greatest self-control, and with indifference which is striking ; His heart remains filled with the Father. He uses the world as Master, not as servant or companion, but as Lord and Master passing through it, and so at every moment the heart of Jesus is filled with the glory of God, the love and presence of the Father. This law of life is right and just and equitable because of the relation in which Jesus deliberately stands towards God and creation, emptied of all but the Father. (2) There is the Jesus-Love of the souls and bodies of men, His fellow men, and we remember at what a price He proved His love for us, for the emptying of self was complete up to the pouring out of life and death. And as the emptied heart of Jesus is filled with love of the Father, so the heart from which Blood poured is rightly offered as the love of the hearts of men.

There is the same principle of self-surrender, self-sacrifice, and self-emptying, in order to be filled.

3. *We are called to be filled with the life of Christ and with the love of God.* God offers us all things up to the full measure of our capacity for Him. We are surrounded by witnesses who remind us that God is waiting to give us His gifts, His Body and Blood, His Spirit, new life, light, and love, joy and strength—He waits to bestow them on us, to fill us, only He cannot act against His own moral laws, laws which are eternal—he who will be filled must first be emptied. By no miracle can God fill with supernatural gifts a creature full of earth and himself ; not even God can do this. It is morally and psychologically impossible, and there-

fore in Baptism we promise to empty ourselves of self, Satan, and the world. Therefore the Father has led us into our walk in life, the Religious Life and the Ministry, and He has surrounded us with hedges of Holy Religion—the Three Promises to Jesus, the Vows. Over that hedge of the Vows you are to throw everything that is not Jesus, and to abide within your hedge with Jesus, and with what belongs to Jesus. And as you live with Him within the hedge He lays on you an interior correspondence with Holy Religion and the Vows ; a growing contentment, joy, satisfaction with what is within, and indifference to what is without, and this growing correspondence is through penitence and mortification. It is the spirit which seeks to-day in Jesus to rightly forget the past, and the power of being content with the present which He makes for us, self-emptied, that He may fill us.

It is easy to state the duty lying on us of abiding within the hedge of Holy Religion and the Three Vows, but the interior working of penitence and mortification needs the perseverance which only Jesus can give, which must be sought from Jesus only. For we reach points from time to time in our lives when no one on earth can give us advice or help, when either we yield completely to Jesus, or we become accustomed to a kind of obedience and surrender which we dignify by the name of obedience and surrender. When we reach that point it is only in His power that we are going to make the final effort to empty ourselves, and then we need a living hope in His promise to fill us, we are asking for *Him*, not for anything else. We are within our hedge, longing to correspond with Jesus but down on our knees, broken, and we have made up our

minds to give Him our complete surrender, and in our agony He speaks and says: 'I am the Light of the world, if any man follow Me he shall not walk in darkness.' 'If any man will do My will he shall know of the doctrine.' 'I am the Bread of Life, he that eateth My Flesh shall never die.' 'In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' And we risk everything in virtue of our hope, and we make the great adventure; we have lived long enough in this half-and-half state, now obeying Jesus and now making reserves, but it has not been happy nor worth while.

Therefore now we are going to take Jesus at His Word, and it is to be Jesus and Jesus only, whatever it may cost. We are going to do it, and to run this risk of yielding ourselves on the chance that God is true, and in the measure that I empty myself He will fill me with Himself. Let us lift up our hearts to receive the promise: Light, Joy, Life, Glory, are promises which alone make life worth while—in short, Jesus Himself. 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man open I will come in.' 'If any man love Me, him will My Father love and we will come to him.' That is the law of self-surrender with regard to the individual soul.

4. *Let us consider the Community as a Community of self-surrendered souls, each one having made the great surrender.* Though self revives and we have to remake this surrender, which is conversion, and though we go on getting more and more converted, yet the day does come when the great surrender is made for the last time and self really dies, and it is that for which

we are looking, for even if Jesus is very gentle and patient yet the generous soul will ask Him if the time has not come to make the last great surrender. If love of self be ruled out in the Community, then in consequence the corporate prayer of the Community—Mental Prayer and the recitation of the Divine Office—becomes a corporate offering. The time of prayer which a Sister is bound to spend, and the recitation of the Divine Office, is an offering which is meant to express before God complete surrender of self by a Community of hearts all entirely devoted to the Father's glory and interests, and who are prepared at the first glimpse of the Father's will to follow it, however blindly. The root of the offering of prayer by the Community is self-surrender, and in that sense it is well-pleasing to God in Christ. When we do not feel quite happy with one another it helps to rebuke us if we remember that God is looking into the Community heart and expecting the Community offering.

Let us consider the corporate service of the Community, including the life within the houses of the Community, and all the work that is done in the houses, all the mutual relations of Sister with Sister, as well as the work done outside. And it is here that individuality comes in, and we need to remember that every piece of work belongs to the Community and is part of a corporate offering to the Father by the Community, and the aim must be that the Community can offer all the work done. God must be able to see through the heart of the individual, a heart dead to self, to the heart of the Community, and He is pleased, because then the work is selfless and is done in the spirit of love, forbearance, and charity. The individual Sister puts

all she has into the work, not for herself, but because she wants the Community to have something glorious to offer to the Father.

Then there is the corporate offering of Reparation. As daughters of God and brides of Christ, it is quite impossible not to desire that Jesus shall use you in filling up what is lacking in His sufferings, in desiring that He may find in your hearts something to offer to the Father. What Jesus asks chiefly is this : the obedient following of Him, and the readiness to pick up any cross He may give as you follow after Him, bringing to the corporate offering the most complete obedience in your power. The Community looks for it, God looks for the most perfect observance of Holy Rule and the fulfilling of the threefold Vows, and that is the following of Jesus as He goes before. That is in its essence the corporate offering. For God looks straight through the endurance of each individual, hoping to find that the basis of her mortification and sacrifice is the heart of the Community itself, the common and corporate offering.

VI

THE ONENESS OF THE ETERNAL LOVE AND THE BELOVED AS A PRINCIPLE UNDERLYING THE PASSION

LET us contemplate Eternal Love breaking forth by way of the Incarnation, and dwelling among the sons of men. Contemplate Incarnate Love drawing to Himself the beloved disciple John, binding him to Him with bands of love. Contemplate the same Incarnate Love dwelling in us sacramentally and mystically, and let us contemplate Him as He uses us, working through us as He strives to illuminate us, as He seeks to grant us His peace, and as continually He strives to carry us with Him into the Father's love.

Let us consider as a principle underlying the Passion the oneness of the Eternal Love and the Beloved.

1. Let us try to realize the fact as the truth and the beauty of the Passion, that He Who suffers and He Who dies is God. The Passion is the revelation of Love, not of fulfilling a claim that God makes on One Who is another, outside Himself; the truth and beauty of the Passion would fade away if we believed that Eternal Love were imposing upon another—other than Himself—all the pains of Calvary. Eternal Love meets all the needs of divine holiness, and all the needs of sinners, God redeems us on His Cross, Eternal Love

meets the need. Let us remind ourselves of the oneness of God, the Godhead is One—one love, one need, one will. The Father gives His only-begotten Son in one act of the one will of God. As you contemplate the Master in the Passion, the Saviour on the Cross, greet Him with divine worship, ‘My Lord and my God’; the one will of the Father made Flesh. It is the revelation of the inner love of the Eternal God, and were there any distinction between the natures of God and of Jesus, the Passion would not be true or beautiful.

The life we are asked to lead of suffering and struggle and service, of self-emptying, with all that it means of grief, pain, suppression, and service, is a true life and a beautiful life, in so far as it is an outward expression of the indwelling Jesus. Suffering for its own sake, asceticism in itself apart from Jesus, is not true, and is not beautiful; and the idea that God takes pleasure in pain and grief because it *is* pain is not true and cannot be true; but the conviction, purpose, and self-revelation of Eternal Love that there must be a union between us and Him in the battle with evil is true and beautiful. The revelation on Calvary is true in every generation of human life. The truth and beauty of suffering does depend on a true union with Eternal Love in the suffering of to-day. Unwilling, rebellious suffering has no beauty and no truth, but the real self-surrender of a rational soul into the hands of Jesus, that He may use it in His revelation of Love, is true to what we know of God and of our conscience; and it is beautiful and it rings true; it appeals in its beauty, and it depends on the union of ourselves with Jesus and the members of His Body.

2. *Our own union with Jesus.* In the measure in which we wish to serve Him in the Religious Life, and to be true to Him in the Community Life, we must pay great attention to our fundamental union with Him. Think of the simple side of it, a child-like attitude on our part towards Jesus which makes possible the fruit of union. We begin to realize our union with Jesus as seeing Him outside ourselves, a habit of looking up to Him and speaking with Him, crying out to Him whether in joy or sorrow ; and then we begin to become conscious of Him as present, as bringing people to us, as making claims on us through others ; we see Him standing by us. In this way He is an exterior influence, touching us, warning and commanding us, and prayer becomes a communion between ourselves and Jesus by our side. Then little by little we take a further step, and we learn that Jesus is to be sought within us ; the indwelling Jesus trying to reveal to us our union with Him, Jesus within. So that we may hope to become more conscious of being used by Jesus, He in us and we in Him, and that thus a kind of peacefulness is granted, not always, but now and again and, please God, increasingly. That peace is Jesus within us ; we have not got to look for Him for we know that He is within us, as though one's inner self leant on Jesus within and one leans back upon the heart of Jesus in peace. 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace.' Thus He shall be able to use us exactly as He pleases, and whatever kind of life we have to lead, it will be a true and beautiful life because it is one with Jesus, Eternal Love.

3. *Certain fruits which this union with Jesus produces in our life.* There is (1) a confident dependence on

Jesus, a kind of dependence which is prepared to leave everything in the last resort to Him ; which never forgets that the work is Christ's work, and the pain is Christ's pain, and the sorrow and darkness are Christ's sorrow and darkness. It is only when work and endurance are in the Name of Christ and for Christ that we can leave to our Lord the net issues of everything. We only share with Jesus, and He gives us the smallest share ; the responsibility is the responsibility of Eternal Love and belongs to Jesus, and we only share by obedience. Considering what it would mean to God, to oneself, to the Community and the world were this fruit of confidence and dependence to grow more richly in our hearts, we have the right to pray for it, for all manner of sorrow, anxiety, and petty thoughts would be gone, if only we had this confident dependence on Jesus.

(2) There is the second fruit—enthusiastic love for Jesus. This means not only that we should grow in putting Him and His will first, but it means such an enthusiastic love for Him that it becomes the motive power underlying all other motives for activity, for patience, and for endurance. Loving Jesus as we love Him, we are content even with overwhelming suffering, because He loves us and we love Him, and nothing else matters because of our love to Him and He is using us. This is a love which never counts the cost of what it gives to its Beloved.

(3) Enthusiastic love passes into a deepening penitence and hatred of oneself and one's sin, and this is the fruit to which we should give the prize. This fruit of penitence and self-hatred, the result of confident, enthusiastic love, is not a question of temperament, but of

pure, deliberate, rational choice. I look to Jesus and weigh up what the world and self offer, and because I trust Him and begin to love Him, and I know that nothing is worth while but Him, deliberately counting the cost I would hate sin and self, hate any signs of self-independence and assertion and aggressiveness, hate the sensitiveness of self, hate the whole thing and long to lose my life and be found in Jesus.

That is a wonderful fruit of union with Jesus, and in the measure in which we are really sincere we shall seek to cultivate it. It is a gift you cannot ask for selfishly, you cannot hate self in order to have the reputation of being a saint ! You have to be sincere with Jesus when you ask for power to hate self. He must be able to see you really do wish to leave self in order that He may fill you ; and the Religious that so walks with Jesus may move about conscious of His presence within her. She has this spirit of dependence which gives her freedom and happiness and joy, and out of love to Jesus, if her motive be keen and pure, she has a right to hope that He will help her to hate herself and to be entirely penitent. And whatever struggle this may entail, she knows that this is her gift to the Bridegroom, for it is through much tribulation that we enter into the kingdom of His heart.

4. Lastly, through union with Jesus and its fruits, we reach our knowledge of God, of God's love and will. The revelation and the knowledge of God comes through intuitions, occasional flashes ; God, as it were, pushing through the fog in our soul, and illuminating it for a moment, revealing His will, purpose, and love ; and on these occasional flashes we go on leading our lives, often going back and finding ourselves following

worldly ways, but as we depend on Jesus these flashes get more frequent. And then we come to another stage, a oneness with God's will and mind, our wills become accustomed to lean on the will of Jesus, our minds moulded on the will of the Father and illumined with the presence of Jesus within. And then we begin to take in little bits of the Father's wisdom and purpose, our minds getting more and more free from earthly interpretation of things, from human standards of judgement and values, so that in Jesus the Father's standard gets itself adopted according to our measure, and the soul does really get a knowledge of God through union with Jesus in this oneness of will and mind. From that we pass to a higher and more perfect stage in which our union with Jesus is so faultless, all foreign elements being taken away, that it becomes beyond the power of evil to break, and as we lean against His heart we really see God. In the oneness of our love, will, and mind with His love, will, and mind, we see God in Jesus, and in consequence of that God looks on us as we lie in the heart of His Son and He comes to see us in the likeness of Jesus.

This is an unspeakable hope, and beyond us, but yet a promise, for we shall be like Him and we shall see Him as He is. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' There is no way to purity of heart for us except through the deepening of penitence, and the hatred of self. Let us endure the Cross and despise the shame, let us, to whom Jesus has been so good, to whom He has given so lofty a vocation, let us trust Him that, wherever He may lead us, whatever burden He may lay upon us, we will always look upon it as His own, trusting Him to carry it. Thus,

escaping from sorrow and sadness of a world of sin by casting ourselves into His heart, loving Him so much that our love for Him and His for us may deaden us to sorrow and pain, let us allow this love to enfold us that neither Satan nor man can henceforth avail to hurt us. Let us sing the Song of the Three Children which they sang as they praised the Lord in the furnace of fire : 'I am not alone because the Father is with me.'

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